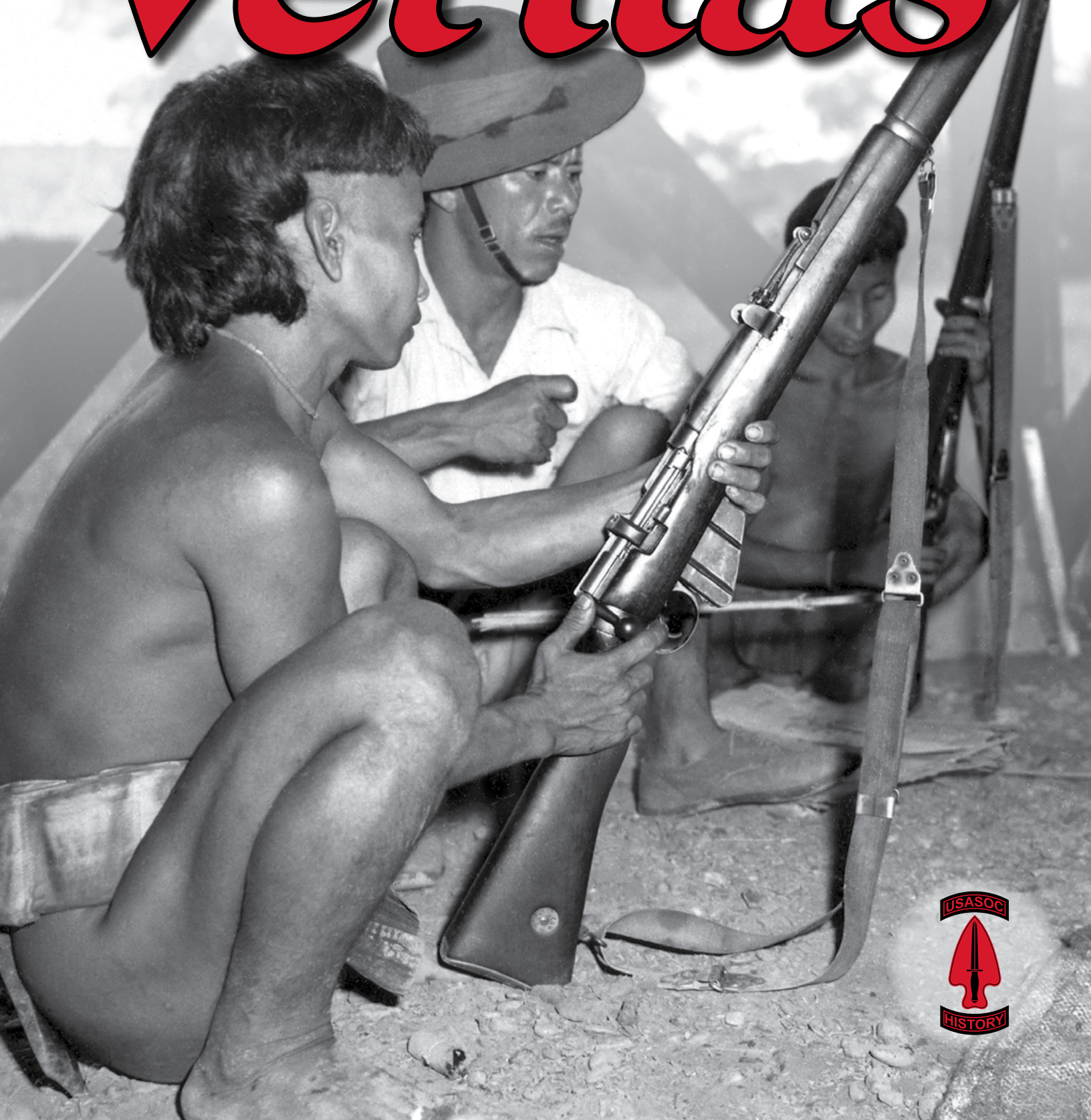


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Veritas



Errata

The FTX Free Legion III 30th Anniversary Reunion photograph was mislabeled. It was not held in 1973 and was not the 30th Anniversary Reunion. This photograph most likely dates to 1976/77 and represents the 25th reunion.

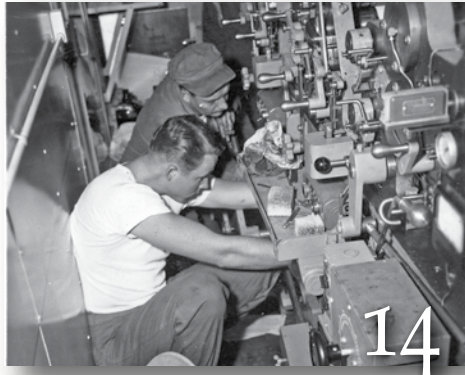


The view looking north across the Panjwayi Valley in southern Afghanistan.





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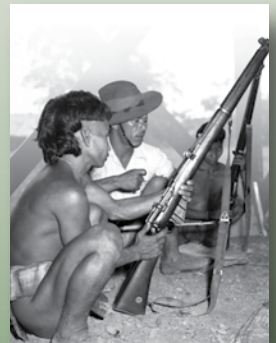
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Cover Photo: A Gurkha instructs ethnic Naga recruits in the use of the British No.1 Mk III* rifle at OSS Detachment 101 headquarters, Nazira, India, 1944. Detachment 101 primarily recruited Kachins from north Burma to fill out its guerrilla elements. Detachment 101 units also reflected the diverse ethnic makeup of Burma, however, and employed Nagas, Shans, Gurkhas, Chins, Chinese, and Burmans.



The Azimuth of the USASOC History Office

This *Veritas* was our “bull’s eye” for 2007. The publication of four issues in a calendar year makes *Veritas* a true quarterly journal. Quality improvements will continue. The previous issue, 3-07 was a significantly better product after Dan Telles, the Art Director, and Laura Goddard, our new Graphic Designer, incorporated themselves into the print process. After a two-year contracting fight we are proud to announce that Frank J. Allen, the retired 4th PSYOP Group and 5th SFG veteran who designed the cover and drew chapter illustrations for *All Roads Lead to Baghdad: Army Special Operations Forces in Iraq*, has joined our staff to add further dimension to our publications. SF and PSYOP veterans know well what Allen will add to *Veritas* and our next book.

The U.S. officer/enlisted Salvadoran veteran interview ratio has tilted towards the majority of our Force, the NCOs. Sixty-five percent of those specific topics for next year’s book have been addressed via interview with Salvadoran war veterans [*Soldados Profesionales* (professional soldiers) to colonels and generals]. Period Salvadoran photographs, unit insignia, shoulder patches, and other memorabilia will be included in our book. Because

Congress mandated a fifty-five-man training advisor cap, the Salvadoran military fought the war with US monetary, logistics, and equipment support. Therefore, their combat experiences, insights, and perspectives on American assistance offer valuable insights. After all, the Salvadorans did promulgate the first successful national COIN campaign since the Philippines government crushed the HUK rebellion.

The article “Detachment 101 and the Campaign for Myitkyina Part I” was not ready for publication. Origins of the Green Beret and the distinctive unit insignia of 10th and 77th SFGs are so interconnected that these topics will be addressed together. The USASOC History Office, the NC Museum of History and Science, and the Airborne and Special Operations Museum in downtown Fayetteville combined assets and collections to produce a special OSS exhibition that opened in mid-October 2007, neatly coinciding with the OSS Detachment 101 reunion. We are proud to have veterans review and comment on our draft articles. Thanks for your assistance and accolades. Recommendations, constructive comments, and requests for special operations history topics are welcome.

CHB

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OPERATION MEDUSA

Regaining Control of Afghanistan's Panjwayi Valley

By Kenneth Finlayson and Alan D. Meyer

**In keeping with USSOCOM Policy, Special Operations Soldiers Major and below and the operational objectives in this article have been given pseudonyms.*

IN September 2006, the "Desert Eagles," 1st Battalion, 3rd Special Forces Group (3rd SFG), operating as Task Force-31, fought to drive Taliban forces out of the strategically important Panjwayi Valley, 35 kilometers southwest of the city of Kandahar, Afghanistan. Operation MEDUSA was designed to push the Taliban out of their traditional stronghold. The subsequent failure of the NATO/ISAF (International Security Assistance Force) to retain control of the strategic valley after Operation MEDUSA enabled the Taliban to return in the late fall. In January 2007, another campaign, Operation BAAZ TSUKA, was required to drive the Taliban out of the valley again. This article focuses on the action of C Company, 1/3rd SFG that ousted the Taliban from the Panjwayi during Operation MEDUSA. Operation BAAZ TSUKA, will be presented in a future Veritas article.

The city of Kandahar and Kandahar Province have always played a significant role in Afghanistan's history. The province's fertile valleys make it one of the "bread-baskets" of the country. The ancient city of Kandahar

has been an important population and trade center since the time of Alexander the Great.¹ The British repeatedly occupied Kandahar in a succession of Anglo-Afghan Wars lasting from 1830 to 1870.² During the Soviet invasion and occupation of Afghanistan from 1979 to 1988, Kandahar was a center of Mujahideen resistance against the Soviet Army. There was heavy fighting in and around the city until the Soviet withdrawal.³ Kandahar is widely considered to be the birthplace of the Taliban, the radical Islamic militant group that gained control of Afghanistan in 1994.⁴ It was their final redoubt before U.S. and Afghan forces drove them from power in December of 2001.⁵ This city, the province capital, has great symbolic meaning to the leadership of the Taliban's fiercely dedicated fighters.

Kandahar is more than just symbolically significant in the continuing fight for southern Afghanistan. It is "the key to central and northern Afghanistan. And Panjwayi is the key to Kandahar."⁶ The Panjwayi District, beginning 35 kilometers southwest of the city encompasses





MAJ Jamie Hall* AOB-330 commander, briefs his men prior to commencing operations in the Panjwayi. The focused preparatory training of the "Desert Eagles" in the U.S. paid great dividends during Operation MEDUSA.



Special Forces soldiers with a Taliban newsletter. Intelligence collected on Taliban intentions led to Operation MEDUSA.

the Arghandab River valley. The river is part of an extensive watershed that creates a broad, fertile region in the desert of southwest Afghanistan. The valleys provide natural lines of communication

between Kandahar and Taliban safe havens in Pakistan. Residents of Panjwayi raise grapes, corn, and other crops making it the breadbasket of Kandahar and the surrounding country.⁷ The 3rd SFG soldiers were returning to a familiar place.

The "Desert Eagles," (TF-31), were no strangers to Afghanistan. The battalion was starting its fifth rotation in the war-torn country since U. S. Special Forces (USSF) helped the Afghan Northern Alliance (in the north) and Anti-Taliban Forces (in the south) drive the Taliban from power in late 2001. Many veterans were returning for their third, fourth, and even fifth combat tours. Many had first-hand experience in the Panjwayi. Prior to leaving Afghanistan in early 2006, the 1/3 SFG company commanders were assigned operational areas for their next rotation.⁸

The Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force-Afghanistan (CJSOTF-A) was led by Colonel (COL) Edward M. Reeder and his 7th Special Forces Group staff when the 3rd SFG returned in August 2007. COL Christopher K. Haas, 3rd SFG commander, assumed command of the CJSOTF shortly after Operation MEDUSA commenced. The CJSOTF-A is a multi-national command with special operations forces from twelve countries including Canada, The Netherlands and the United Arab Emirates, that directed special operations in Afghanistan in support of NATO/ISAF. ISAF is the UN-mandated force under Security Council Resolutions 1386, 1413 and 1444. 1/3 SFG was returning to the same area of operations (AO) it had from June 2005 to February 2006.⁹

Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) Donald C. Bolduc, the 1/3 SFG commander, focused on operations to reduce the Taliban strongholds and sever their connection with the local population. Following up on previous rotations, LTC Bolduc began his security assistance strategy by improving the combat capability of the Afghan government forces. Repetitive collective training was key to building up the Afghani's confidence in themselves.¹⁰ Bolduc's intent was to "balance security with development and 'nest' the capabilities of SOF [special operations forces] with those of the conventional forces (NATO/ISAF)."¹¹ The summer of 2006 at Fort Bragg had been dedicated to preparing for the next rotation in August.

Major Jamie Hall*, C Company, and the other company commanders took maximum advantage of the opportunity. Hall's training plan was decentralized down to the operational detachments, who concentrated on weapons firing, driver training, communications training, and medical live tissue training (for treating battlefield wounds).¹² Hall held weekly updates with his team commanders to review intelligence updates received from Afghanistan to refine tactics and respond to new developments.¹³ He made sure that all of his 18Fs (the Special Forces Operations & Intelligence NCOs) had the time and resources they needed to conduct detailed area studies. As a result, C Company 1/3 SFG was ready to "hit the ground running." And they had to because Operation MEDUSA kicked off just days after they arrived.

Afghan Northern Alliance forces, with the help of U.S. Army Special Forces and coalition airpower, had cleared this region of the Taliban in early 2002. However, in the years that followed, control of the Panjwayi had gradually been lost. By late summer 2006, NATO/ISAF



3rd SFG Flash



10th MTN
Division SSI



87th Infantry
Regt. DUI



25th Artillery
Regt. DUI

units entering the area were regularly attacked by 100 or more fighters. The impetus for Operation MEDUSA was increasing evidence that the Taliban were massing for a major offensive against the city of Kandahar. Canadian Brigadier General David A. Fraser, the NATO/ISAF commander, developed Operation MEDUSA to disrupt the planned attack and restrict Taliban access to the “the key to Kandahar,” the Panjwayi. Operation MEDUSA was designed to open Highway 1, stop the Taliban advance on Kandahar, and clear the Panjwayi Valley of insurgents.”¹⁴ LTC Bolduc had been closely monitoring NATO/ISAF plans from Fort Bragg. Though the Desert Eagles would arrive in Afghanistan just days before the operation was scheduled to commence, he thought that MEDUSA was important to the embattled country’s future and he committed to support it.¹⁵ Bolduc knew his SF teams were prepared to operate in the valley.

Panjwayi’s topography favored dismounted operations. The thickly clustered farms and fields provided excellent cover and concealment. The relatively large rural agrarian population was generally passive. Taliban fighters easily blended in among them. Most of the “roads” were just centuries-old foot paths through small, heavily vegetated orchards, vineyards and fields, protected by sun-dried mud walls as hard as concrete. Interspersed throughout were “grape houses” described by Sergeant First Class (SFC) Carl Freeman* of ODA 331 as “2-story huts with mud walls 2-3 feet thick. They have 6-8 inch slits in the walls for racks to hang the grapes and they are natural bunkers.”¹⁶ The terrain was especially difficult for mounted troops, more so for NATO/ISAF units that relied on armored personnel carriers (APCs) and tanks for protection.

Elements of 1/3 SFG (TF-31) began arriving in-country on 22 August 2006.¹⁷ TF-31 was to “conduct consolidation operations (defined as the combining of elements to perform a common function, in this case USSF and NATO/ISAF) to establish, maintain, or regain control of key population centers and lines of communication in the regions, provinces or districts.”¹⁸ The TF-31 “heavy



AOB-330 prepares for the movement across the Red Sand Desert. Crossing the desert allowed the unit to infiltrate undetected behind the Taliban.

lifting” was to be done by the Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police. A Company, 3rd SFG, (5 ODAs) was going to Zabel Province, and B Company (5 ODAs) to Oruzgan Province. C Company (6 ODAs) was responsible for Kandahar Province and would support Operation MEDUSA.¹⁹

MAJ Hall’s initial SOF task force for MEDUSA consisted of Operational Detachment Alphas (ODAs) 331 and 326 from B Company because four C Company ODAs, 332, 333, 334 and 335 were conducting missions in Farah, Gereshk, Herat, and Shindand respectively. Hall’s small company headquarters, Operational Detachment Bravo 330 (ODB-330), had a Special Operations Team-Alpha (SOT-A) attached to provide signal intelligence and electronic warfare support. Afghan National Army (ANA) “companies” worked directly with each ODA. The ANA “companies” were thirty-man units armed with AK-47 rifles, RPK machine guns, and RPG (Rocket Propelled Grenade) launchers.²⁰ On 26 August 2006, ODB-330 departed Kandahar Airfield to begin its infiltration of Area of Operations (AO) FALCON*. ODA

This view of the Panjwayi Valley shows how compartmented the agrarian region is and the difficulty of conducting mounted operations.





The GMV was the primary troop-carrier vehicle for the Special Forces soldiers of TF-31.



Crossing the Red Sand Desert in convoy, ODA 336 interspersed the ANA Ford Ranger pickup trucks with their GMVs.

336, which had just arrived from Fort Bragg, would join the task force on 3 September.²¹

MAJ Hall chose to avoid the well-watched Highway 1 leading straight from Kandahar into the Panjwayi Valley. He elected to move south down Highway 4 towards Spin Buldak, then turn west and north across the trackless Red Sand Desert to slip unnoticed into his operational area.²² "I wanted to quietly infiltrate the enemy's battle space before they knew we were coming."²³ The 60-mile desert route proved to be daunting. "It was like driving across Mars," said MAJ Hall.²⁴ "It was very arduous. Often we had to stop and unload the vehicles to free them. In 120° heat, it was a testament to intestinal fortitude," said Staff Sergeant (SSG) Don Ring*of ODA 331.²⁵ The task force, with its Ground

Mobility Vehicles (GMV) and Ford Ranger pickup trucks carrying the ANA, struggled against shifting sands, sixty-foot dunes, and deep ravines for four days.²⁶ While ODB-330 slipped into the AO, the concurrent movement of the NATO/ISAF elements eliminated any chance of surprise.

The obvious start of operations was further exacerbated on 30 August when Asadulah Khalid, the governor of Kandahar Province, warned the local populace in a radio broadcast that NATO/ISAF units were coming to search the Panjwayi for enemy combatants. His intent was to give the local population a chance to leave before the impending battle. It worked. MAJ Hall's elements, now through the Red Sand Desert and observing from a prominent ridge on the south side of AO FALCON, described the exodus of the thousands of civilians streaming from the area.²⁷

SFC Peter Carney*, ODA 336, said: "We watched people walk out just like you would see in [the movie] *The Ten Commandments*. They were on donkeys, on carts... walking out, on camels...they were all old men, women, and children."²⁸ SFC Brett Keith said "We estimated several thousand leaving."²⁹ The SF veterans knew that the older boys and able-bodied men had been recruited, often against their will, to fight with the Taliban. Carney had his ANA troops set up an informal checkpoint and collect information. He told them, "Don't get on [harass] the people, just ask some simple questions: why are you leaving, what's going on, just very general questions." The refugees answered openly: "The Taliban say there's going to be a very big fight here."³⁰ The Taliban were also telling the civilians to leave the valley.³¹

Operation MEDUSA's main effort would be made by TF Aegis, made up of the 1st Battalion, Royal Canadian Regiment Battle Group (1st RCR BG) with an attached mounted reconnaissance platoon of Danish soldiers and a company of ANA troops.³² The Canadian battalion was equipped with LAV-III (light armored vehicles). The LAV-III is a Canadian-built, eight-wheeled vehicle with heavier armor than the U.S. military's Stryker. It mounts a 25mm cannon and carries six infantrymen inside with a three-man crew.³³ The battalion was supported by four M-777 155mm towed howitzers of E Battery, Royal Canadian Horse Artillery.³⁴ The Canadian forces started moving on 2 September.

The NATO/ISAF plan was to have the 1st RCR BG travel down Highway 1, conduct a deliberate river crossing from the south of the Argendab River and assault Objective OSPREY*. The Canadian's used preplanned heavy artillery and air strikes as they advanced cautiously down the road. On 3 September, an IED (Improvised



ISAF SSI



Royal Canadian Regimental Crest



Royal Canadian Horse Artillery Crest



Danish Jyske Dragenregiment Crest

Explosive Device) killed four Canadian soldiers in a LAV and the main effort stalled on the south side of the river. Taliban forces facing the Canadians numbered around 200. For the next three days, heavy fighting prevented the Battle Group from advancing across the river to OBJ OSPREY.³⁵ Hall's SF task force deep in the Taliban rear changed that situation.³⁶

On 3 September, SF and ANA troops approached Objective HAWK*, the 3,000 foot hill known as Sperwan Ghar that was the last of four Named Areas of Interest (NAIs) assigned by NATO/ISAF to reconnoiter and secure. Thus far, with the exception of challenging terrain and a few inconclusive enemy contacts during their infiltration through the Red Sand Desert, the movement had been relatively uneventful. The best available intelligence prior to the commencement of operations estimated the Taliban strength in the valley to be 60-80 fighters.³⁷ This estimate proved to be woefully incorrect, as more than 800 Taliban eventually engaged the Coalition forces.³⁸ The mission of Hall's SF task force was to secure the southern flank of the NATO/ISAF main effort.³⁹

The morning dawned clear and bright with the promise of another sweltering day in the Panjwayi. Three ODAs, together with infantry troops from the ANA, moved forward to secure Objective HAWK. Two detachments (ODA 331 and ODA 336), their ANA counterparts and MAJ Hall's GMV moved forward to reconnoiter Sperwan Ghar. The GMVs were leading. ODA 326 remained in reserve as the Quick Reaction Force (QRF). From the hilltop, the SF soldiers and their ANA allies would be able to observe and provide supporting fires north across the Arghandab River valley.

Within a few hundred meters of the hilltop, the lead GMV opened fire when they saw Taliban fighters repositioning RPGs. SFC Brett Keith* from ODA 336 summed up what happened next: "We walked into a hornet's nest. They were waiting for us."⁴⁰ The insurgents rained small arms and RPG fire on the task force from three sides. MAJ Hall immediately radioed "Troops



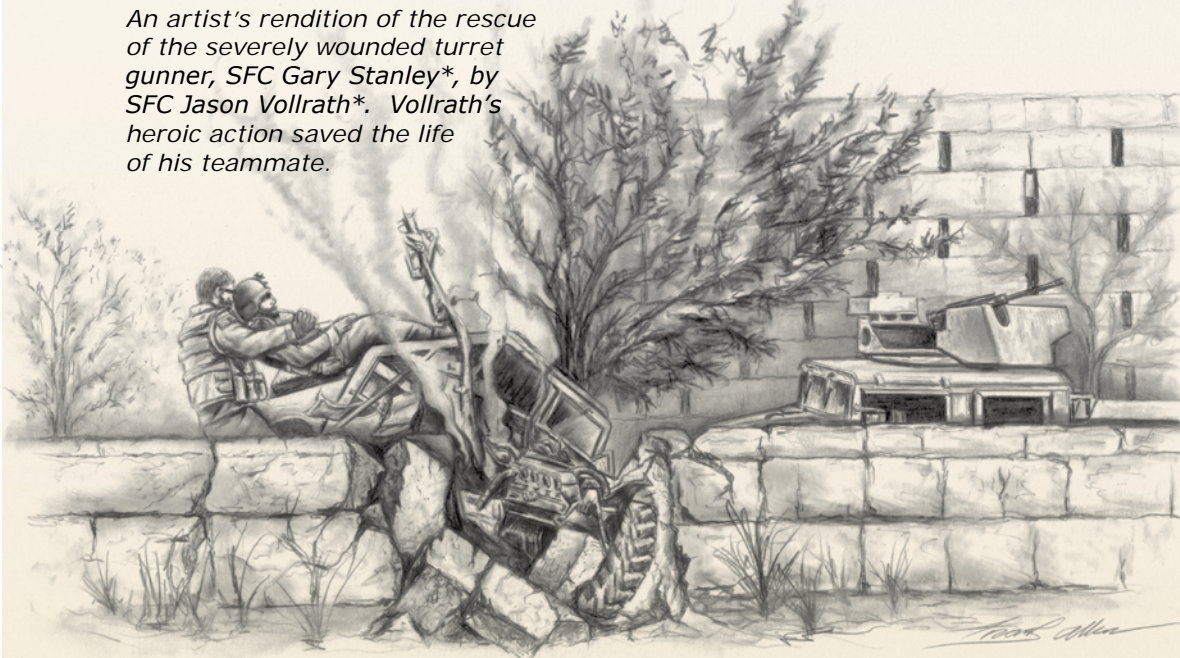
With a GMV in overwatch, Special Forces and Afghan National Army troops gather at the foot of Sperwan Ghar. It was near here that an IED destroyed a GMV.



A UH-60 Black Hawk medical evacuation helicopter created a dust cloud landing near Sperwan Ghar.

in Contact" to TF-31 and requested close air support (CAS). As Hall recalled afterward, "Within 20 minutes of the start of the fight we were running out of ammunition."⁴¹ Both the SF and ANA troops quickly fired their basic load of ammunition in the intense engagement. The two lead teams broke contact with the enemy and fell back to link up with the QRF. The

An artist's rendition of the rescue of the severely wounded turret gunner, SFC Gary Stanley, by SFC Jason Vollrath*. Vollrath's heroic action saved the life of his teammate.*



A Special Forces medic treats a wounded team member. Three SF soldiers and one ANA soldier were wounded and evacuated during the initial assault on Sperwan Ghar.



A Special Forces soldier fires his M-240B machine gun at Taliban fighters moving toward Sperwan Ghar. From the hilltop, the Special Forces teams could suppress enemy movement in the valley below.



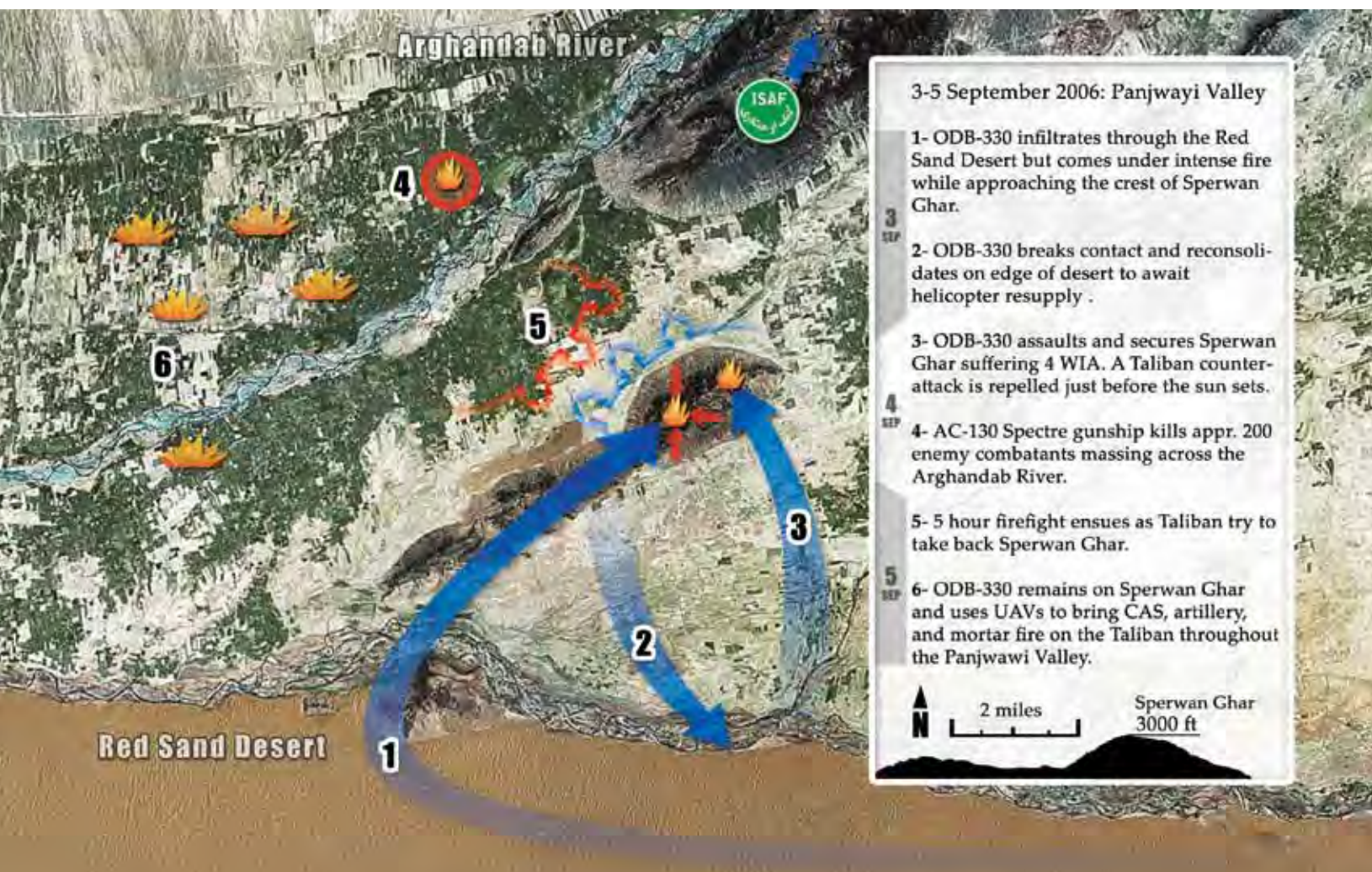
A U.S. Air Force AC-130H Spectre. Firing 40mm and 105mm cannon, the Spectre is a devastating CAS weapons platform at night.

entire task force reconsolidated at the edge of the desert to await an ammunition resupply by helicopter. Amazingly, despite the ferocity of this first firefight, there were no friendly casualties.⁴² That night, MAJ Hall ordered ODA 333 to occupy a nearby hill, Ma'sum Ghar, and provide overwatch of Objective Osprey* north of the Argendab river and the rest of the valley.

CPT Martin Bolling* and ODA 333 were airlifted to Ma'sum Ghar from Gereshk on the morning of 4 September for what proved to be an eight-day stint on the hill. "We were air lifted in by British CH-47's and the ANA ran us

up the hill in their trucks. We did a battle hand-off with the Canadian Special Operations Forces guys who were there. The Canadians left three snipers with us. Our mission was to take charge of CAS north and south of the Argendab. We had heavy action the first few days, and then it died off as the Taliban pulled out," said CPT Bolling.⁴³ The ability to bring in accurate CAS would be critical to the operations of the SF task force.

Early on 4 September, Hall's resupplied task force again attempted to take Sperwan Ghar. With Coalition CAS in support, the ODAs attacked the hill, with ODA 326 in the





From their position on high ground overlooking the valley, the Special Forces teams employed Close Air Support to drive the Taliban out of Panjawi.



The eight-wheeled LAV-III was the primary Canadian troop carrier. It had difficulty maneuvering in the restricted terrain of Panjawi.

lead, followed by ODA 331 and 336. The ANA moved behind their respective ODAs. As enemy fire intensified, the ANA soldiers dismounted and began attacking up the hill. One Afghan soldier stepped on a “toe-popper” anti-personnel mine. When Major Hall halted his GMV to call for a MEDEVAC (Medical Evacuation) helicopter, a GMV from ODA 331 passed his vehicle to bring in the wounded man.

As the vehicle moved up the road, it was struck by a command-detonated IED. Most of the troops riding in this vehicle had dismounted moments earlier. Still, they were knocked down and several wounded by the blast. The driver was blown clear, but the turret gunner, SFC Gary Stanley*, was severely wounded and trapped with his legs inside. SFC Jason Vollrath*, leapt out of his GMV and sprinted to the wreck. Vollrath dragged Stanley to safety as heat from the burning GMV caused the mortar rounds and other ammunition stored inside to explode. After extinguishing his comrade’s burning clothes (and his own), Vollrath carried the injured Stanley to safety while under heavy enemy fire. All told, the ANA mine casualty and the three seriously wounded SF

soldiers were evacuated by helicopter. SFC Vollrath, who sustained burns to his hands and arms while heroically rescuing SFC Stanley, refused to leave the fight.⁴⁴

The American SF and the ANA continued their assault and pushed the Taliban off the hill. By the end of the day, Hall’s task force “owned” Sperwan Ghar, but the Taliban were not ready to relinquish this key terrain. Just before sunset, while the ODAs and ANA were preparing defensive positions for their first night on the hilltop, the Taliban mounted a counterattack. Hall’s men repelled the assault, killing four of the enemy in the process. Later that night, task force members, now reinforced with elements of the TF-31 headquarters “Jump TOC” (forward-deployable Tactical Operations Center) who had flown in by CH-47 helicopter, worked with U. S. Air Force AC-130 Spectre gunships to kill approximately 200 enemy combatants who were massing on the north side of the Arghandab River.

The fighting resumed on 5 September. “The day after we took the hill, we had a sustained gunfight of about four or five hours,” said SFC Brett Keith. “By that time guys were just filling in gaps, moving and executing without being told.”⁴⁵ With a commanding observation point on top of Sperwan Ghar and with UAVs (Unmanned Aerial

“You gotta be aggressive, ...I’m not saying aggressive stupid.”

Vehicles) providing real time intelligence, the task force was able to bring devastating CAS, artillery and mortar fire on the Taliban throughout the valley. By the end of the day on 5 September, the Taliban quit trying to retake Sperwan Ghar and stayed north of the river. A “tactical snapshot” of the battle for Sperwan Ghar summed up the action: 20 Enemy Killed in Action (KIA) by Direct Fire; 200 Enemy KIA by Indirect Fire (mortar, artillery, and CAS directed by SF elements); one ANA soldier and ten USSF troops Wounded in Action (WIA).⁴⁶

According to the original MEDUSA plan, by occupying Sperwan Ghar, MAJ Hall’s task force accomplished its assigned tasks. But, as the old military axiom goes, “no plan survives first contact.” This proved true for the NATO/ISAF units. Shortly after a Canadian mechanized infantry company conducted a deliberate crossing of the Arghandab River on 5 September, an enemy ambush disabled one of the LAV-IIIs and wounded several soldiers inside. This prompted the commander to halt his advance and establish a defensive position. “The Canadians had only moved 500 meters past their line of departure when they got hit,” said SSG Zeke Henry* of ODA 331 observing from a blocking position on the south side of the river.⁴⁷ Isolated on the north side of the river, the company could not reach Objective



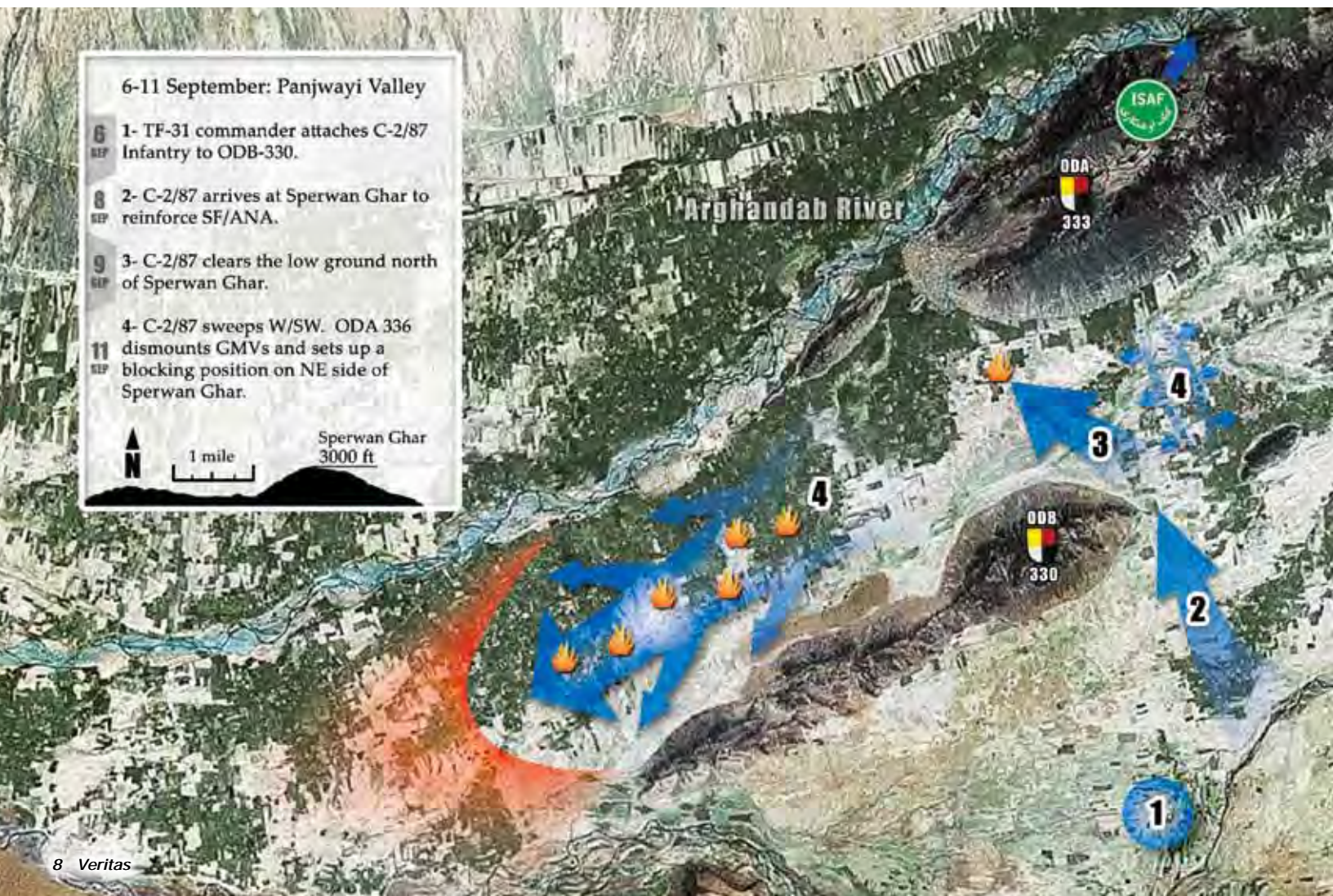
Afghan National Army troops in a Ford Ranger pickup. Each ODA had an ANA company attached during Operation MEDUSA.

OSPREY, located directly across the Arghandab River from Objective HAWK and Sperwan Ghar.⁴⁸

With the Canadians halted, Hall offered to clear the remainder of Operation MEDUSA's objectives. The conduct of the NATO/ISAF main effort highlights a common complaint voiced by troops from TF-31's Desert Eagles. NATO/ISAF soldiers were for the most part ready and willing, but in the end unable, because of limitations placed on them by their higher commanders and national governments – to aggressively take the fight

"...You get them on the run, and you've got 'em."

to the Taliban. The units from most NATO/ISAF nations (with a few exceptions, including the U.S. and a handful of other countries) typically responded to any IED or enemy ambush by stopping and establishing a defensive perimeter. Ironically, as the SF soldiers pointed out, this "cautious" tactic made the now-stationary unit even more vulnerable. SFC Peter Carney from ODA 336 said: "They [the insurgents] only have so much logistics...most of them only carry a few magazines. So when you first get hit, you come up with a quick basic plan, then you maneuver on them. Once you get them on the run, you've got them...because you [prevent] them from going back to their caches and getting more ammunition."⁴⁹ On the other hand, he warned, halting to establish a defensive perimeter gives the enemy a chance to come up with a plan, put in more IEDs, and reinforces their initial success. "You gotta be aggressive," Carney maintained. "And I'm not saying 'aggressive stupid.' Just keep moving...I've said it once, I'll probably say it three more times...you get them on the run, and you've got 'em."⁵⁰





Team Comanche supported the Special Forces Task Force with two M-119 105mm howitzers. The 1st Platoon, A-5/25 Artillery provided direct supporting fires during Operation MEDUSA.

With the Canadian unit bogged down on the far side of the Arghandab River, the Taliban, strengthened by a steady stream of incoming fighters from outside the valley, turned their attention to the SF task force on Sperwan Ghar. The task force responded with accurate and continuous well-directed CAS from their vantage points on Sperwan Ghar and Ma'sum Ghar.⁵¹

By 6 September they had stopped the Taliban. However, if Hall's men left the hilltop to pursue, they risked



Troops of the 2/87th Infantry, 10th Mountain Division patrol the Pakistan border. C Company 2/87 was attached to AOB-330 for Operation MEDUSA.

losing control of the dominant terrain. The TF-31 commander, LTC Donald Bolduc, fixed this problem by requesting a U.S. infantry company team with artillery that he attached to ODB-330.⁵² The company was OPCODE (Operational Control) to the ODB-330 commander.⁵³

On 8 September, Team Comanche, composed of Company C, 2nd Battalion, 87th Infantry Regiment, 10th Mountain Division, was sent to reinforce the SF/ANA success



A Coalition AH-60 Apache helicopter provides Close Air Support. The ability of the Coalition to provide almost continuous CAS was key to routing the Taliban in Panjwayl.

near Sperwan Ghar. The next day, on 9 September, the company, commanded by Captain Steven Helm and mounted in up-armored HUMVEES, joined the fight by clearing the low ground on the north side of Sperwan Ghar. CPT Helm positioned one 60mm and one 81mm mortar with the ODB on Sperwan Ghar and positioned his two attached 105mm howitzers of the 1st platoon, A Battery, 5/25th Artillery, 10th Mountain Division, four kilometers south of Sperwan Ghar in direct support.⁵⁴

"We left Kandahar the morning of the 7th to link up with the ODB south of Sperwan Ghar. Our mission was to clear Objective HAWK north to the Argendab River," said CPT Helm. "On the 8th there was a prolonged battle that pushed the enemy across the river."⁵⁵

In the clearing action, MAJ Hall's task force suffered its only KIAs during Operation MEDUSA. A U.S. ETT advisor (Embedded Training Team) and three ANA soldiers working with Team Comanche were killed during combat. Approximately 40 enemy personnel were killed by Team Comanche and CAS.⁵⁶ The fighting continued sporadically on the 9th and 10th.

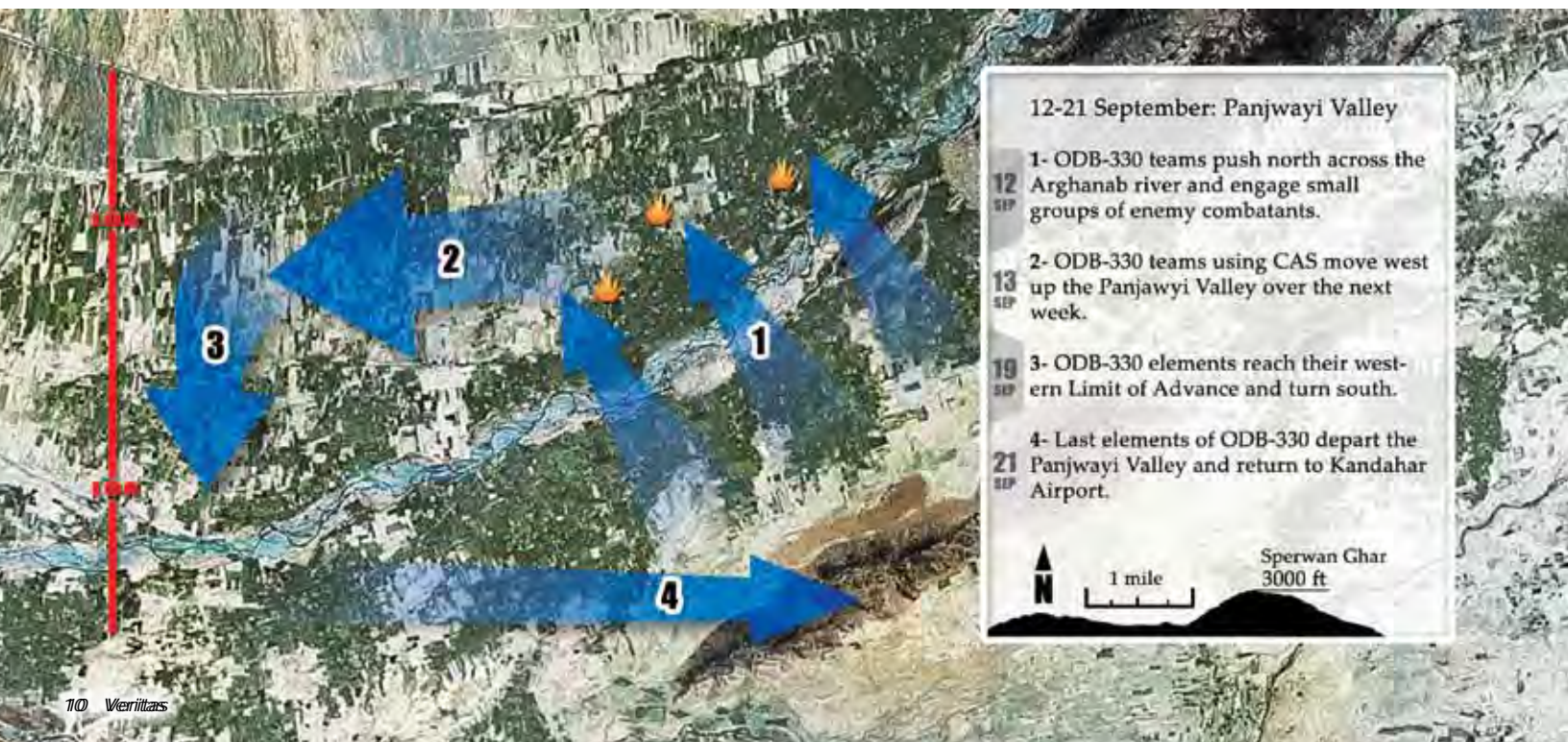
11 September was a busy day for Major Hall's task force. While the 10th Mountain Division troops swept west-southwest through the densely-vegetated low ground between Sperwan Ghar and the Arghandab River, Hall told Captain Bart Scanlon's* ODA 336 and their ANA company to establish a blocking position several kilometers northeast of Sperwan Ghar. Hall hoped that Scanlon's men could interdict any Taliban fighters entering or exiting the area being cleared by the U.S. infantry. ODA 336's mission turned out to be far easier said than done.

Time and again Captain Scanlon's element encountered terrain impassable for vehicles. "MAJ Hall wanted the blocking position set up as soon as possible" said Scanlon.⁵⁷ The team leader had two options: continue trying to find a route that would accommodate his vehicles, or move

forward dismounted and leave his heavy fire support, mortars and .50 caliber machine guns, behind with the vehicles. Reluctantly he chose to dismount. Leaving SFC Carney with ten ANA soldiers to guard the vehicles, CPT Scanlon and the rest of his team and 20 ANA troops pressed forward on foot. "The terrain was very restricted. We did about a 2 kilometer dismounted movement, but we couldn't see anything. We halted in a complex of grape houses [storage sheds] which is where we got hit," said Scanlon.⁵⁸ A fierce fire fight ensued and the ODA was only able to break contact when U.S. Navy F-18 Hornets from the USS Enterprise, called in by ODA 333, strafed the Taliban with several low-level runs.⁵⁹ ODA 336 then returned to Sperwan Ghar.

On 12 September, ODB-330, ODAs 326 and 331, C-2/87 infantry, two companies of ANA troops, and a United Arab Emirates (UAE) Special Operations detachment, pushed north across the Arghandab River to secure Objective OSPREY. There they found weapons, radios, and cell phones on the objective, indicating that the Taliban had left in haste. "The resistance was light and sporadic," said CPT Helm, the C-2/87 commander. "We had to clear all the buildings dismounted, and the vegetation and the irrigation ditches made it slow going."⁶⁰ SFC Dan Sterling* and SFC Freeman of ODA 331 accompanied the infantry company to help with the ANA. "Once we crossed the river, we helped spot the targets as the infantry guys worked their way through the irrigation ditches and grape arbors. The vegetation gets up to ten feet high."⁶¹

The decision to allow Hall's troops to cross the Arghandab River was a major change in plans for Operation MEDUSA. Hall's combined task force continued to move west during the following week, securing one MEDUSA objective after another. Along the way, the SF troops picked out potential locations for permanent checkpoints that, if properly manned





From the summit of Ma'sum Ghar, members of ODA-333 overwatch the Panjwayi. From this vantage point, they could bring in CAS on the Taliban forces anywhere in the valley.



A resupply from a CH-47D Chinook. The HSC of TF-31 was able to keep the forces in the field supplied for more than twenty days during continuous operations.

and patrolled by friendly forces, would prevent Taliban infiltrators from returning.

By 19 September, Objectives CONDOR*, OWL*, and RAVEN* were cleared and Hall's task force had reached its western Limit of Advance (LOA). Taliban forces had stopped fighting and were withdrawing westward. "Most of the locals in the area were out and happy to see the patrol. Some people expressed appreciation for driving out the Taliban," said SFC Peter Carney.⁶² The goals of Operation MEDUSA had been achieved. ODB-330 was credited with killing more than 500 enemy combatants and driving an entrenched Taliban force of more than 800 fighters from the region while suffering minimal friendly casualties.⁶³ Effective CAS fires were instrumental in routing the Taliban. "AC-130 fires proved to be decisive in dealing with the Taliban stronghold," said the operational summary at the end of MEDUSA.⁶⁴

On 21 September, after four weeks of continuous combat operations, the last TF-31 units departed Panjwayi and returned to Kandahar Airfield to refit before heading out to conduct missions in other parts of southwest Afghanistan. C-2/87 returned to Kandahar and the last ODA to leave the valley, ODA 336, closed with the rest of the task force in Kandahar. "We started the mission as a screening force on the south side of the river. We never expected to be knee-deep in .50 cal brass," said SSG Zeke Henry of ODA 331.⁶⁵

An often overlooked, but essential part of Operation MEDUSA was the impressive logistical support. SFC Peter Carney of ODA 336, spent more than three weeks on the ground in Panjwayi ("twenty-three days of 120 degree weather without a shower...I smelled *good*," he joked), had nothing but praise for the TF-31 support troops based at Kandahar Airfield. "We were only supposed to be out there for four days, not twenty-three," Carney said.⁶⁶

Members of the TF-31 Headquarters and Support Company (HSC), commanded by Captain Patrick Trembly*, met each ODA as it returned from Panjwayi. HSC's



An Afghan National Army unit worked with each ODA during Operation MEDUSA.

Support Detachment personnel cleaned and performed maintenance on every GMV as well as on all individual and crew-served weapons brought in from the field. They collected dirty uniforms and did laundry for the teams. Each ODA had a "hootch" (living area). They found snacks, towels, clean P.T. (physical training) clothes, shower shoes, soap, and sundry items waiting on cots. Trembly's soldiers arranged things so that the combat-weary ODA members could totally relax. As MAJ Cary Wentworth* the TF-31 Assistant S-3(Operations Officer) said: "All you have to do is wash your body. You have P.T. clothes and flip flops to walk around in until your clothes are clean."⁶⁷

Everything that Hall's task force needed for this extended operation, prepackaged Meals-Ready-to-Eat (MREs), water, fuel, ammunition, and replacement weapons had to be packed, palletized, and flown in. Hall said "we kept having guns going down...just your normal stuff anytime you're shooting like we were."⁶⁸ Most supplies arrived by CH-47 helicopter, but U. S. Air Force C-130s also made several resupply airdrops into

the AO. In the latter stages of Operation MEDUSA, five ODAs, five companies of ANA troops, and an infantry company team were being resupplied daily. SFC Carney said: "A lot of them didn't sleep, just like we didn't... Man, I wanted to get up and kiss every one of them."⁶⁹ For the infantry company, the support exceeded what they had received on previous operations.

Major Cary Wentworth, said: "During the battle we 'mermited' hot chow out to them on two occasions. [Mermits are insulated containers used to transport food to troops in the field]. On the first occasion, the 10th Mountain company first sergeant was totally surprised. He said: 'We did Operation MOUNTAIN SWEEP and were out in the field for sixty days and ate MREs the whole time.' Major Hall swears that the second time we brought mermits out to them, the first sergeant had tears in his eyes." said Wentworth.⁷⁰ The performance of Team Comanche justified first-class support.

"We really appreciated what the 10th Mountain troops brought to the fight. Those guys did a phenomenal job. It was a good marriage between conventional forces and SF," said MAJ Wentworth.⁷¹ LTC Bolduc called Team Comanche "an impressive group; a good company."⁷² The ODA NCOs were more to the point: "They saved our a**. We worked well with them...just like clockwork," said SFC Peter Carney.⁷³

Operation MEDUSA made news around the world, but the press focused on the NATO/ISAF units. They neglected to mention that a handful of SF soldiers, one company of U.S. infantrymen from the 10th Mountain Division, and four companies of the ANA ended up doing most of the actual work.⁷⁴ However, not everyone was blind to their contributions. In an official letter of recognition dated 30 September 2006, Canadian Brigadier General David A. Fraser, overall commander of Operation MEDUSA, wrote:

I want to express my personal thanks to the Soldiers and officers of United States Army Special Forces Task Force 31 for their recent efforts as part of Operation MEDUSA ... The personal courage demonstrated time and time again by the soldiers of Task Force 31 was remarkable, and I stand in awe of their mission focus, offensive spirit, and dedication...You are true warriors and epitomize the traits expected from the Special Forces community.⁷⁵

The success of Operation MEDUSA in driving the Taliban from the Panjwayi District shows how a well-planned training program translates into success on the battlefield. SFC Peter Carney said: "The key to it was that we already knew the whole situation before we got there. That comes from the train-up we did [at Fort Bragg] between one rotation and the other."⁷⁶ The ability of the Special Forces teams to effectively employ their ANA troops in the fight and bring devastating CAS against the enemy throughout the valley made ODB-330

the "combat multiplier" that ultimately achieved victory in Operation MEDUSA.

The intense combat operations of Operation MEDUSA inflicted heavy casualties on the Taliban and prevented their planned attack on the city of Kandahar. In the weeks that followed, the failure of NATO/ISAF to maintain a security presence in the valley caused the 1/3rd SFG to return a few months later to clear the insurgents from the same locations. As a result, a second campaign, Operation BAAZ TSUKA, was conducted to regain control of the valley. In December, the Desert Eagles would return to the Panjwayi. ▲

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Kenneth Finlayson is the USASOC Deputy Command Historian. He earned his PhD from the University of Maine, and is a retired Army officer. Current research interests include Army special operations during the Korean War, special operations aviation, and World War II special operations units.

Endnotes

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- 2 Robert D. Kaplan, *Soldiers of God: With Islamic Warriors in Afghanistan and Pakistan*, (New York: Vintage Press, 2001), 186-87.
- 3 Grau and Gress, 31-33.
- 4 Kaplan, 143.
- 5 Charles H. Briscoe, et. al., *Weapon of Choice: ARSOF in Afghanistan* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2003), 182-183. Depending upon which source one consults, the Taliban has many "birthplaces." According to a *Time* magazine article, the Dar-ul-uloom seminary in the Indian farming town of Deoband is "the spiritual home of the particular brand of Islam practiced by the Taliban." Michael Fathers, "At the Birthplace of the Taliban," *Time*, Friday, September 21, 2001, available online at <http://www.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,175913,00.html> (accessed July 31, 2007). However, most available sources identify either the city of Kandahar or the Maiwand district in Kandahar Province as the birthplace of the Taliban, and virtually all acknowledge Kandahar city as the site of the Taliban's last stand in 2001. Janu O. Tamayo, Scott Canon, and Martin Merzer, "Taliban to Surrender Last Stronghold," Knight Ridder News Service, Friday, December 7, 2001, available online at http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qn4196/is_20011207/ain10752212 (accessed July 31, 2007); and Hugh Graham, "Two Small Villages Key to NATO Strategy," *Toronto Star*, September 6, 2006.
- 6 There are multiple westernized spellings for virtually every place name in Afghanistan. For example, in the source quoted here, Panjwayi was spelled "Panjawai." Throughout this article, the author chose a single spelling for each place name, and to avoid reader confusion has altered direct quotes (including this one) to reflect this single spelling.
- 7 Graham, "Two Villages Key to NATO Strategy"; Sergeant First Class Peter Carney*, ODA 336, interview by Major Alan D. Meyer, 3 May 2007, Fort Bragg, NC, digital recording in the USASOC History Office Classified Files,

- Fort Bragg, NC; Major Christopher Wentworth*, interview by Major Alan D. Meyer, 3 May 2007, Fort Bragg, NC, digital recording in the USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 8 Lieutenant Colonel Donald Bolduc, 1st Battalion, 3rd Special Forces Group, interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe and Dr. Kenneth Finlayson, 14 September 2007, Fort Bragg, NC, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
 - 9 Bolduc interview.
 - 10 Bolduc interview.
 - 11 Bolduc interview.
 - 12 Major Jamie Hall* C-1/3 SFG interview by LTC Robert W. Jones, Jr. and Dr. Kenneth Finlayson, 20 November 2007, Fort Bragg, NC, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
 - 13 Hall* interview, 20 November 2007; Master Sergeant Terry K. Schmidt*, interview by LTC Robert W. Jones, Jr. and Dr. Kenneth Finlayson, 20 November 2007, Fort Bragg, NC, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
 - 14 Operational Summary, "SOTF-31 Vignette and Strategy Brief for Panjwayi/Pashmul," USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC slide 7.
 - 15 Bolduc interview; Curlew*, 18, 80; Wentworth*, "Breaking the Afghan Insurgency," 12; and Wentworth* interview.
 - 16 Sergeant First Class Carl Freeman*, ODA 331, interview by Dr. Kenneth Finlayson and LTC Robert W. Jones, Jr., 30 November 2007, Fort Bragg, digital recording in the USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
 - 17 Carney* interview.
 - 18 Operational Summary, "SOTF-31 Vignette and Strategy Brief for Panjwayi/Pashmul," USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, 4. **The Department of Defense definition of consolidation operations is derived from: www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/doddicct/data/c/01210.html.**
 - 19 Bolduc interview. Operational Summary, "SOTF-31 Vignette and Strategy Brief for Panjwayi/Pashmul," USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, 2.
 - 20 Hall* interview, 20 November 2007.
 - 21 Carney* interview.
 - 22 Hall* interview, 20 November 2007.
 - 23 Major Jamie Hall* C-1/3 SFG interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe and Dr. Kenneth Finlayson, 22 September 2007, Fort Bragg, NC, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
 - 24 Hall* interview, 20 November 2007.
 - 25 Staff Sergeant Don Ring*, ODA 331, interview by Dr. Kenneth Finlayson and LTC Robert W. Jones, Jr., 30 November 2007, Fort Bragg, digital recording in the USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
 - 26 Curlew*, 15-16; and Wentworth*, interview; Hall* interview, 20 November 2007; **"Humvee" is a popularized spelling for the U.S. military's HMMWV, or Highly Mobile Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle.**
 - 27 Hall* interview, 20 November 2007.
 - 28 Carney* interview.
 - 29 Sergeant First Class Brett Keith*, ODA 336, interview by Major Alan D. Meyer, 10 May 2007, Fort Bragg, NC, digital recording in the USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
 - 30 Curlew*, 15; Carney* interview.
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 - 32 Operational Summary, "SOTF-31 Vignette and Strategy Brief for Panjwayi/Pashmul," slide 8, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
 - 33 Stephen Priestly, "Passage to Panjwaii – Canadian Tanks Go to Afghanistan, Leopard Tanks Shake Up the ISAF Armoured Vehicle Mix," September 2006, <http://www.sfu.ca/casr/ft-isaf-armour2.htm>.
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 - 36 Curlew*, 15; Wentworth* interview.
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 - 38 Schmidt* interview.
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 - 40 Keith* interview.
 - 41 Hall* interview, 22 September 2007.
 - 42 Curlew*, 15; Carney* interview; and Wentworth* interview.
 - 43 Captain Martin Bolling*, ODA 333, interview by Major Alan D. Meyer, 11 May 2007, Fort Bragg, NC, digital recording in the USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
 - 44 Operational Summary, "SOTF-31 Vignette," slide 12; Curlew*, 16, 18; Wentworth* interview.
 - 45 Keith* interview.
 - 46 Operational Summary, "SOTF-31 Vignette," slide 12; Curlew*, 18; and Wentworth* interview.
 - 47 Staff Sergeant Zeke Henry*, ODA 331, interview by Dr. Kenneth Finlayson and LTC Robert W. Jones, Jr., 30 November 2007, Fort Bragg, digital recording in the USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
 - 48 Operational Summary, "SOTF-31 Vignette," slide 12; and Wentworth* interview.
 - 49 Carney* interview.
 - 50 Carney* interview; ODA 333, group interview by Major Alan D. Meyer, 11 May 2007, Fort Bragg, NC, digital recording in the USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC; Wentworth* interview.
 - 51 Hall* interview, 20 November 2007.
 - 52 Bolduc interview; Hall* interview; **Note: the original request from Major Hall* was for an infantry battalion.**
 - 53 Curlew*, 18; Wentworth* interview; and telephone conversation between Major Jamie Hall* and Major Alan Meyer, 1 August 2007, interview notes in the USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
 - 54 Captain Steven Helm, C Company 2087th Infantry, telephone interview by LTC Robert W. Jones, Jr., 23 August 2007, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
 - 55 Helm interview.
 - 56 Curlew*, 18; Operational Summary, "SOTF-31 Vignette," slide 13; Hall* interview, 11 May 2007. **Note that slide 13 is incorrectly labeled "08 SEP 06" in the original source; the correct date for the actions depicted on that slide (9 September 2006) was confirmed during oral history interviews with Hall* and ODA 333.**
 - 57 Captain Bart Scanlon*, interview by Major Alan D. Meyer, 3 May 2007, Fort Bragg, NC, digital recording in the USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
 - 58 Scanlon* interview.
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 - 60 Helm interview.
 - 61 Sergeant First Class Dan Sterling*, ODA 331, interview by Dr. Kenneth Finlayson and LTC Robert W. Jones, Jr., 30 November 2007, Fort Bragg, digital recording in the USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
 - 62 Operational Summary, "SOTF-31 Vignette," slides 16-19, 21; Carney* interview; and Wentworth* interview.
 - 63 **Final statistics for TF-31 during Operation MEDUSA: 3 enemy combatants captured and 515 KIA; 10 USSF WIA; 1 U.S. ETT KIA (ETTs are non-Special Forces U.S. military advisors embedded with the ANA); 6 ANA WIA; and 3 ANA KIA. Operational Summary, "SOTF-31 Vignette," slide 17. According to another source with access to reliable data, "The Taliban sustained losses not seen since the early stages of the war with 562 confirmed enemy dead, validated through AC130 Spectre [sic] footage and first hand accounts." From Wentworth*, "Breaking the Afghan Insurgency," 12.**
 - 64 Operational Summary, "SOTF-31 Vignette," slide 15.
 - 65 SSG Zeke Henry*, ODA 331, interview by Dr. Kenneth Finlayson and LTC Robert W. Jones, Jr., 30 November 2007, Fort Bragg, digital recording in the USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
 - 66 Carney* interview.
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 - 68 Hall* interview, 22 September 2007.
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 - 71 Wentworth* interview.
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 - 75 Brigadier General David A. Fraser, excerpt from 30 September 2006 letter to TF-31, as quoted in Curlew, 18, 80.
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1st L&L in Korea, A Photographer's Record, 1952-53.

By Charles H. Briscoe

The Korean War veterans of the 1st Loudspeaker & Leaflet (1st L&L) Company, Eighth US Army, a key lineage unit of the 1st Psychological Operations Battalion (Airborne), held their first reunion at Fort Bragg, N.C., from 22-24 May 2007. Four 1st L&L Psywar veterans who were killed in action in Korea were commemorated on 24 May 2007 when their names were added to the U.S. Army Special Operations Command Memorial Wall. The 1st PSYOP Battalion dedicated their classroom to the 1st L&L Company and a Korea Psywar display was exhibited at the Airborne and Special Operations Museum in downtown Fayetteville, N.C. A former 1st L&L Publications Platoon veteran provided a collection of unit photos as a souvenir in 1953.

These photos preserved the daily routine and unit personalities in the 1st L&L in Seoul, Korea, from 1952-1953. They captured the essence of tactical Psywar and

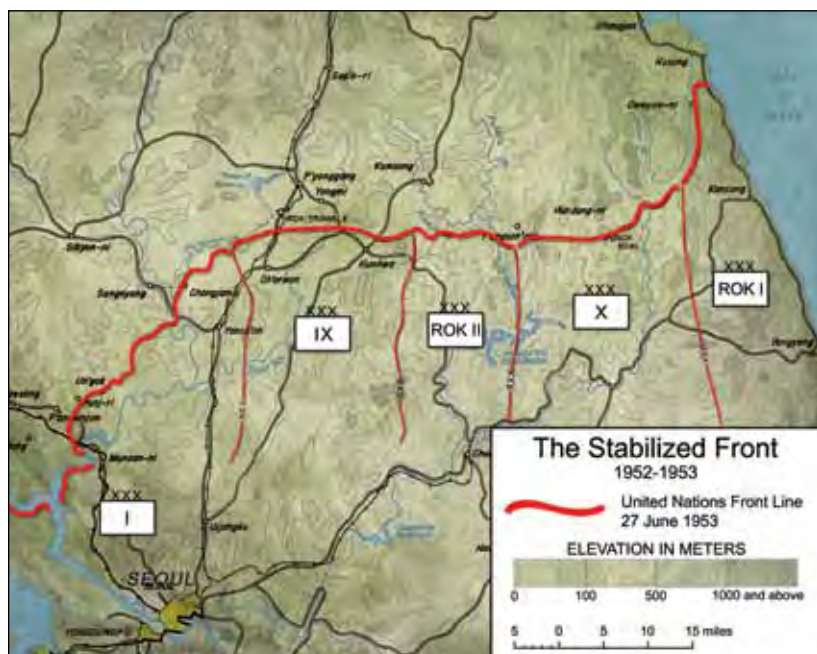


*1st L&L Company
unofficial jacket patch*

are an invaluable historical record worth sharing with today's Army Special Operations Forces. Since former Sergeant Herbert Shevins from Brooklyn, New York, was responsible, the following essay revolves around his photographic contribution as the unit mission shifted from supporting the propaganda war to maintaining vigilance during the armistice. The final tasks were quite different from those envisioned in late summer 1950.

When North Korea invaded South Korea on 30 June 1950, the Special Projects (SP) Division in the G-2 (Intelligence) of Far East Command headquarters in Tokyo, Japan, provided the Psywar capability for the command. General Douglas A. MacArthur ordered its creation in November 1949 to plan Psywar measures to counter Communist aggression in Asia. Mr. J. Woodall Greene, a retired colonel who had been the deputy director of the general's WWII Psywar campaign against Japan, had a staff of four personnel to accomplish that theater mission.¹ The robust Psywar capability built by the Army during World War II had been eliminated in post-war military reductions.

The immediate need for tactical Psywar in Korea was their highest priority. The Tactical Information Detachment (TID) at Fort Riley, Kansas, provided Psywar support to the Army's Aggressor Force during country-wide maneuvers.² Alerted for Korea, the



*The Main Line of Resistance (MLR) in
Korea, 1952-1953, showing the three
U.S. and two R.O.K. corps sectors.*



*1st PSYOP Bn
DUI*



*U.S. Army
Ground Forces
Command SSI*



*U.S. Far East
Command SSI*



*Eighth U.S. Army,
Korea SSI*



The 1st L&L Company cadre board the Yokohama ferry to Pusan, Korea, on 15 October 1950, bound for Eighth U.S. Army, Korea, then located at Taegu in the Pusan Perimeter.



Left: 1LT James E. Dalzell, original 1st L&L Publications Platoon Leader, aboard the Yokohama ferry bound for Pusan, Korea, 15 October 1950. After Korea, LT Dalzell graduated from the Special Forces Course of the U.S. Army Psychological Warfare School in 1954. Right: Dalzell's Valentine's card reflects what was required to make the 1st L&L operational by April 1951 (courtesy Louise Dalzell).



The original 1st L&L Company officers in Seoul, Korea, October 1951. Front L to R: 1LT Hillard J. Trubitt, L/S Platoon, MAJ Donald W. Osgood, Company Commander, CPT Jay V. Russell, Executive Officer, 1LT Richard L. Keator, L/S Platoon. Back L to R: 1LT James E. Dalzell, Publications Platoon, 2LT Quillian D. Clements, L/S Platoon, and 1LT John W. Rich, III, Propaganda Platoon.

twenty-man TID became the nucleus for an Army Loudspeaker & Leaflet Company effective 1 September 1950. The detachment packed its limited equipment, departed Fort Riley on 9 September, and left Seattle, Washington, on 15 September aboard a U.S. Navy transport headed to Japan. Told that their heavy equipment would be

shipped separately to Korea, the 1st L&L cadre boarded the Yokohama ferry to Pusan, Korea, on 15 October bound for Eighth U.S. Army (EUSAK) in Taegu, Korea.³

The 1st L&L Company was activated on 4 November 1950 with 8 officers, 99 enlisted men, 3 printing presses, 12 loudspeakers, and 27 vehicles authorized. The unit administratively fell under the EUSAK Special Troops Command, but the G-2 exercised operational control. No priorities were given for equipment, US Army Psywar School-trained personnel, or required language skills. It took until April 1951 to find the original TID assets lost in Japan and to get them shipped to Korea and to collect critical T/O&E (Table of Organization and Equipment) equipment to become combat effective.⁴

The 1st L&L mission was to conduct tactical propaganda operations for a field army and provide qualified Psywar specialists as advisors to the army and subordinate corps staffs. Dissemination of tactical propaganda was to be done by leaflet, information sheets, and loudspeakers.⁵ A company headquarters element supported three operational platoons: Propaganda; Publications; and Loudspeaker. Combat requirements justified a twenty-five percent enlisted overstrength effective 24 April 1951, but the company never reached full strength.⁶



CPT Herbert B. Avedon



*LT Frank C. Kurpiel and
SSG John Eugene "Gene" Sacotte*



SGT Joseph F. Lissberger



Basic Combat Training (BCT) at Camp Kilmer, NJ, February 1952.



Training for combat in Korea at "Fort Lost in the Woods," MO.



1st L&L road sign at the main intersection.



Lifeboat drill on the U.S.N.S. Marine Lynx enroute to Korea, Fall 1952.



1st L&L Company photographer, 1952-1953.



Setting the Hansch camera, April 1953.



The Federal G-513, 94x43 tractor, 4-5 ton, 4x4 was used to move the mobile camera vans.



CPL Herbert Shevins & SSG Joe Lissberger relax by the water tower used to wash the photographic plates.

Sergeant Herbert Shevins, Photo Lithographer, Publications Platoon, 1st L&L, Summer 1952-Christmas 1953.

Herbert Shevins of Brooklyn, New York, was drafted into the Army in early February 1952, two years after graduation from Samuel J. Tilden High School where he was awarded art medals and athletic letters for swimming and gymnastics. His father and brother were veterans, the former of the Naval Expeditionary Force in 1916 (Vera Cruz, Mexico) and World War I, and the latter of the WWII Navy in the Pacific. Since Shevins was a professional lifeguard at Brighton Beach Bay (Post #9), he wanted to follow family tradition by volunteering for the Navy. However, the postwar reduction of its Underwater Demolitions Teams (UDT) prompted Shevins to begin a jewelry making apprenticeship with the Dason Ring Company in Manhattan. His draft notice interrupted these plans.

On 14 February 1952, Herbert Shevins, a newly-sworn-in Army private, left Manhattan with a busload of New Yorkers, for basic training at Camp Kilmer, New Jersey. High aptitude scores qualified him for advanced training at Fort Belvoir, Virginia, as an engineer topographer and photo lithographer. Contrary to most Army military occupation specialties (MOS) assignments, this was a natural fit for Shevins because photography had been a favorite hobby since childhood. After being trained as a photo lithographer, instead of being assigned to an Army print plant in Japan, he was shipped off to Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, for combat training. "The post supposedly had terrain similar to Korea," remembered Shevins. "There we were put through an abbreviated form of basic infantry combat training. To keep from getting separated during night patrols we squashed fireflies on the back of the man's shirt in front of us. It was simple, but kept us from getting lost in the woods."⁷

In the summer of 1952, PVT Shevins boarded a troopship bound for Pusan, Korea. It seemed like almost all the troops were seasick. At the replacement center (depot) new arrivals were given winter clothing and assignments. Since Shevins was going to the 1st L&L, he got aboard the

night train for Seoul. Bundled up in woolen overcoats and pile caps, the weaponless replacements slept on the boxcar floors with duffle bags as pillows. The 1st L&L company clerk met the train. PVT Shevins and another soldier threw their bags into his jeep and off they went.

PVT Shevins was assigned to the Publications Platoon as the photo lithographer. He later became the company photographer. In this capacity he captured soldier life and recorded the evolving Psywar mission of the 1st L&L from the summer of 1952 through Christmas 1953. Shevins served three company commanders during his tour: Captain Herbert B. Avedon, Signal Corps (a WWII OSS and Army Psywar School-trained officer); Captain Oliver W. Rodman, Ordnance Corps; and CPT Raymond E. Forbes, Infantry. Shevins' Korean War time covered the stalemate, the September 1953 ceasefire, POW (prisoner of war) exchanges, and the Armistice periods. After the Armistice, the 1st L&L publication products were no longer Psywar. Loudspeaker teams assisted with POW problems, civil action, and humanitarian projects in South Korea.

Having acquired sufficient overseas points and with his replacement on hand, Sergeant Shevins flew home. He was discharged on 20 January 1954, at Fort Dix, New Jersey. The married veteran used his GI Bill to attend a diamond setting school in Manhattan and then apprenticed with Leonard Sunna, an accomplished diamond and gem setter from Vienna. After that training Shevins worked for some very fine jewelry firms. He set a ring for Charles Reslon, the founder of Revlon, jewelry for movie stars, and a huge necklace for the CEO of Reynolds Tobacco Company. Centered about a 104-carat pear-shaped brown diamond, this project took three months to complete. In 1960, he went into business for himself remounting diamonds and gems for upscale department store chains country-wide. One of his proudest accomplishments was getting a patent. Today, Herbert Shevins is retired and lives in Longmont, Colorado.⁸



*1LT Jay V. Russell,
Loudspeaker Platoon
Leader & Company
Executive Officer, 1950-1952.*



*CPL F. Dwight Blanchard,
L/S repairman, 1951-1952.*



*This Quonset hut at I Corps headquarters served
as 1Lt Ivan G. Worrell's home for three months in
1953 before he became the L/S Platoon Leader.*

This was what the 1st L&L looked like when Private Herbert Shevins was assigned to the Publications Platoon in early November 1952 as a photo lithographer.⁹ Captain Herbert B. Avedon, signal officer for the Ranger Force in Italy and a Morale Operations (Psywar) officer for OSS Detachment 101 in Burma during World War II, was the company's second commander. Lieutenant Frank C. Kurpiel was Publications Platoon leader and Sergeant Joseph F. Lissberger, a U.S. Navy-trained printer and photo lithographer, had just replaced SFC Gene Sacotte as the platoon sergeant and Print Shop supervisor. They were operating Harris Seybold 1722 and Davidson (original TID assets) offset printing presses with 12-hour work shifts. Two trailer-mounted 250-kilowatt generators powered all print equipment.¹⁰

One of two forty-foot M109 mobile print vans, parked adjacent to the Print Shack on the athletic field, had been converted into a photography work area. The adjoining van contained a Hansch camera to make photographic layout plates for the printers. Shevins took most official photos with a 4x5 Speed Graphic camera. He was also issued a 8mm Bell & Howell movie camera.¹¹ Not all L&L personnel worked in the company area—a former private school north of Seoul's East Gate—based on their missions.

The Loudspeaker (L/S) Platoon received its operational assignments directly from the chief of the G-3 Psywar Division at Eighth Army headquarters. The L/S teams worked and lived with the front line infantry units that they supported. The platoon leader rotated back and forth



*SSG Duane D. Luhn, a L/S Platoon section
repairman, worked out of the same I Corps
Quonset hut in 1953-1954.*



*BG Martin, EUSAK, and CPT Oliver M. Rodman,
the third company commander, inspect U.S.A.F.
personnel from the 581st Reproduction Squadron,
Clark AFB, the Philippines, who were training with
the 1st L&L in 1953.*



I Corps SSI



IX Corps SSI



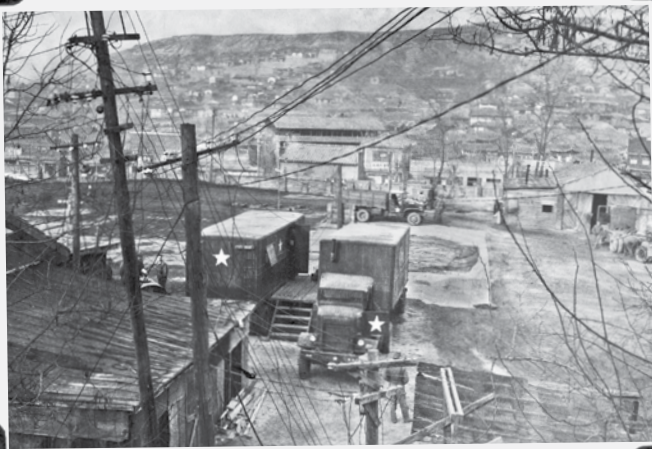
X Corps SSI



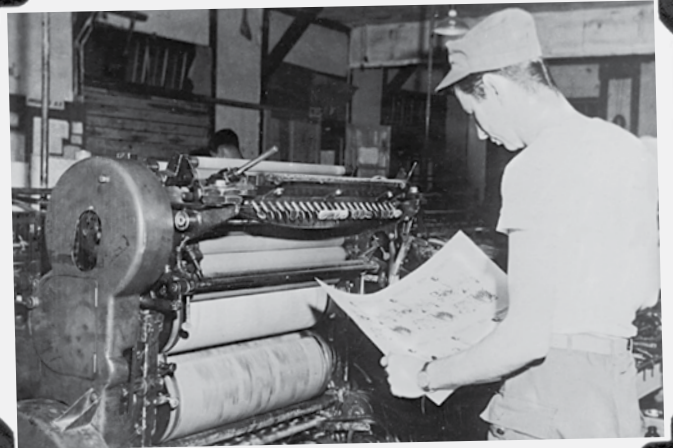
Propaganda Platoon illustrators did their work in the G-3 Psywar Section of EUSAK headquarters. Enemy uniforms, equipment, and arms were used as props.



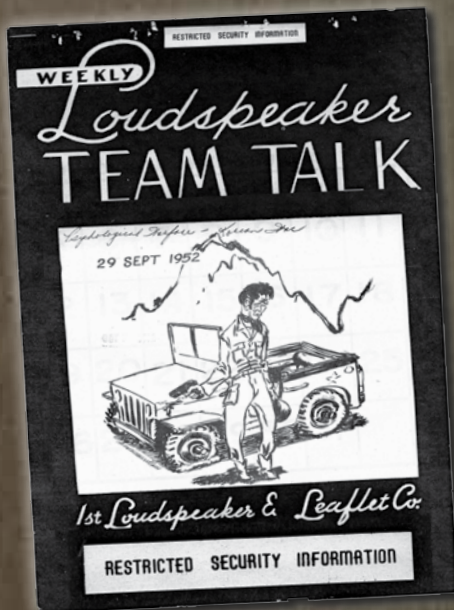
South Korean artists worked side-by-side with 1st L&L illustrators in the G-3 Psywar Section at EUSAK headquarters



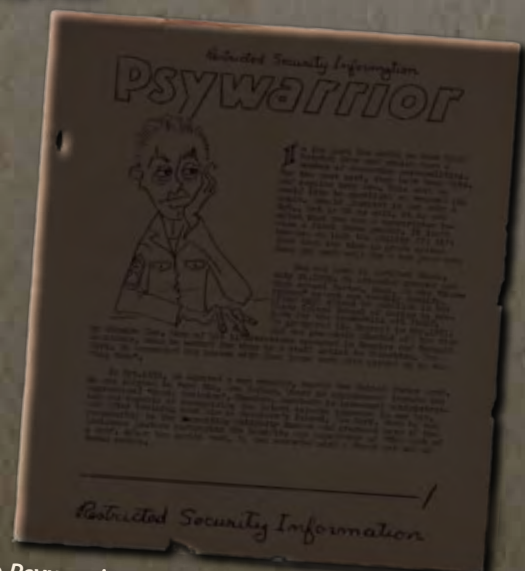
Publications Platoon photo vans with Federal G-513, 94x43 tractor, 4-5 ton, 4x4 in the corner of the motor pool.



PFC Paul A. Wolgeher checks print run on the Harris Press.



Weekly Loudspeaker Team Talks were distributed to the L/S teams of the 1st L&L.



The Psywarrior was a weekly newsletter produced by the Proganda Platoon. It contained troop gossip, intramural sports scores, proganda themes, and international news. Though both were clearly marked "Restricted Security Informa tion" true names were used and distribution was not controlled.

between I, IX, and X Corps headquarters, coordinating requirements while two section sergeants and a L/S repairman supported three to five L/S teams assigned to five corps [three American and two Republic of Korea (ROK)].¹² Propaganda Platoon, assisted by several Korean and Chinese artists and translators, worked in EUSAK headquarters in downtown Seoul. They published weekly *Psywarrior* newsletters for the 1st L&L personnel and *Loudspeaker Team Talks* for EUSAK G-3 Psywar. *Team Talks* contained guidance and broadcasting messages for L/S teams in the field.¹³

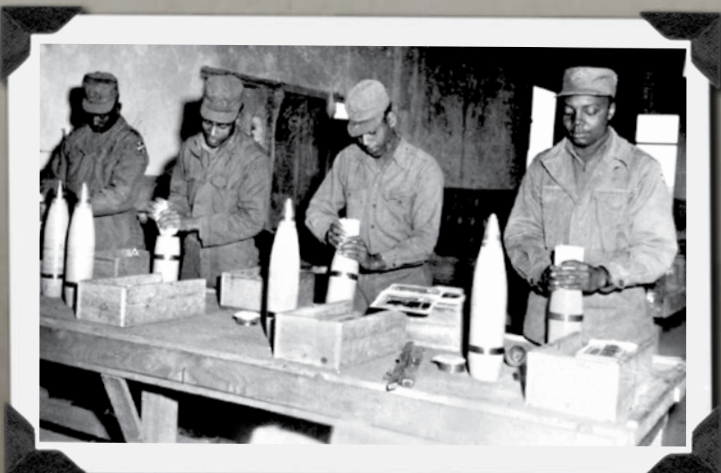
Chinese and Korean propaganda scripts and taped broadcasts were approved by Projects Branch Chief of the G-3 Psywar Division before being distributed to

L/S teams. English, Chinese, and Korean translations were done by university-educated writers isolated from reality in Seoul. Most scripts were too sophisticated for the majority of the target audience—illiterate conscripted Chinese and North Korean peasants.¹⁴

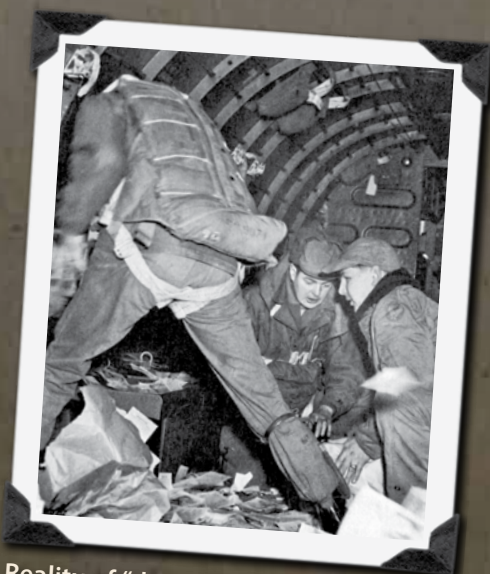
The Publications Platoon turned the artwork, photography, and written messages prepared by the Propaganda Platoon into paper leaflets, information sheets, and posters for dissemination by L/S Teams, Air Force and Army aircraft, and artillery. Leaflets were delivered to a nearby Army ordnance company where they were packed into 105mm artillery shells for shipment to howitzer battalions supporting the front line units. Artillery delivery of leaflets was the most accurate.¹⁵



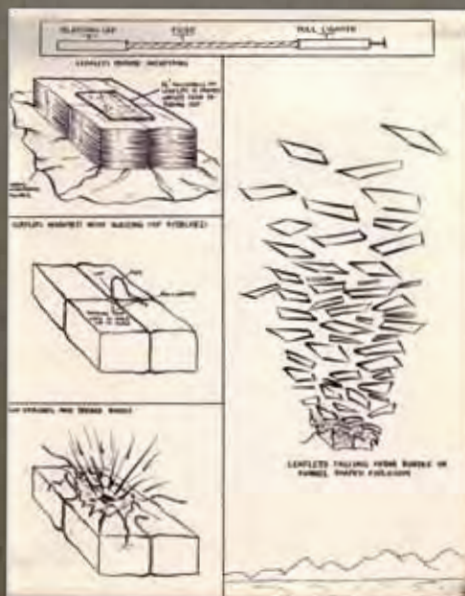
1st L&L Company L/S interpreter, Lin Tse-shin, broadcasts to Chinese Communist Forces (CCF) in the 15th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Infantry Division, I Corps sector. The "mouth muzzle" is actually an early lip microphone.



Leaflet rolls being loaded into 105mm BE Smoke shells at the EUSAK Ammunition Supply Point (ASP) prior to being shipped to Corps artillery units.



Reality of "door kicking" propaganda leaflets from a C-47 aircraft in flight.



Schematic shows the steps involved in dispersing airdropped propaganda leaflets after the "pull fuse igniter" was yanked on the bundle's explosive time cord by the "door kicker."



CPT Leonard Kleckner, I Corps Psywar staff officer, briefs L-19 pilot 1LT Albert D. Ackley on a leaflet drop in 1951.

Still, the primary means was to airdrop packages of leaflets with time fuses from C-47s. The leaflet packages were shoveled, "kicked," and thrown out like they had been in WWI and WWII.¹⁶ Some 15 million propaganda leaflets were dumped on enemy front line troops each week from all Psywar units.¹⁷

The enlisted men of the Publications and Propaganda Platoons were housed eight men to a classroom in the school building. They slept on folding cots in their sleeping bags. The company officers lived in the school principal's house. Everyone washed and shaved in an aluminum wash pan. Houseboys provided hot water each morning, shined shoes, arranged the laundry, dusted the rooms, and cleaned the floors. The enlisted men in the school shared a common toilet and shower room. Waste was taken away weekly by a Korean horse-drawn "honey wagon."¹⁸ There was a daily work routine.

Each morning unless it was raining, a company formation was held outside. Then, everyone went to

breakfast. Company physical training was rare. After the morning meal everyone went off to work areas. The Propaganda Platoon soldiers carrying M1 carbines boarded a 6x6 truck to go to EUSAK headquarters for the day. These "privileged" troops came back for the evening meal.¹⁹ L/S teams assigned to support the infantry lived in the field and only returned when they were wounded, sick, going on R&R (rest & recreation leave), or finishing their tour and departing for the States.

Private Shevins soon discovered that the only Psywarriors that got to experience combat were those that volunteered to "kick" propaganda leaflets behind enemy lines or the L/S team members on the front lines. Combat time before the Armistice could shorten tours to nine months. The only threat to 1st L&L troops in Seoul were small bombs and mortar shells dropped by North Korean Peoples Air Force "Bedcheck Charlies," a.k.a. "Piss Call Petes," pilots flying slow propeller airplanes (70-90 knots) low level from the Sariwon airfield in North Korea.²⁰



An aerial view of the 1st L&L Company compound. Note its close proximity to civilian housing and the old Seoul race track where EUSAK aviation detachment was based.



The main street view of the 1st L&L compound shows the USAF GP medium tents. M2 .50 cal machine guns were mounted atop the tower to the left and in the round command bunker below the American flag during alerts. When SSG Joe Lissberger, Publications Platoon sergeant, "cut loose on some infiltrators from the command bunker one evening, CPT Oliver Rodman almost had a heart attack."



Bunk Area in 1st L&L Billets.



A "pick-up" game of touch football in the motor pool.

Still, whenever the air raid alarm was sounded, the L&L soldiers donned their helmets, grabbed M1 carbines, .45 cal automatic pistols, and the two M2 .50 cal heavy machineguns, and manned defensive positions around the school compound. A Korean KATUSA (Korean Augmentation to the US Army) security platoon guarded the main gate, the rear service entrance, and occupied a watch tower. The Psywarriors positioned one M2 machinegun atop the main water tower and had another M2 inside the command bunker that faced the street directly below the main building. They were not allowed to engage "Bedcheck Charlie" because their walled compound was surrounded by civilian houses.²¹

Since "Charlie" targeted the nearby ammunition and gasoline storage areas, the L&L soldiers were often rewarded with a little fireworks display before going back to their bunks in the schoolhouse. Publications

Platoon Sergeant Lissberger surprised the company commander when he "cut loose" with his M2 machinegun against a group of infiltrators probing the back perimeter. The next morning the soldiers searched the area and found a mute Chinese soldier hiding in a drainage ditch. He had escaped from the nearby temporary POW compound.²²

POW interviews provided current material for L/S teams on line. Broadcasting the names of those recently captured was quite helpful. Better still were the POW-recorded surrender appeals to former comrades.²³ These POWs explained how well they were being treated by UN troops. Promise of good treatment was emphasized in the leaflet messages and safe conduct passes.²⁴ CPL Shevins often traveled to the Chinese POW compound at Yong Dong Po to photograph recently captured soldiers for propaganda leaflets. The Propaganda Platoon Leader's great idea to use the photograph of a ROK minister's pretty daughter on a leaflet caused a real flap...after the official received a copy of one that had



The houseboys arranged to have local laundresses wash and press uniforms.



Christmas at the Korea Cabana Club.



1st L&L Thanksgiving Dinner Menu and Christmas Card for 1952.



The enlisted R&R center in Kyoto, Japan was the Rakuyo Hotel, a Special Services Hotel across from the railway station. R to L CW: Rakuyo Special Services Hotel Kyoto Card, 1LT Jay Russell's drink chit for the 1st L&L Company Club, and CPL Herbert Shevins' Korea Cabana Club Card.

been dropped.²⁵ Free time to enjoy Seoul was welcomed by the Psywarriors.

The L&L soldiers usually had a day off per week and those not being disciplined were given a Rest and Relaxation (R&R) furlough in Japan every twelve months. Since photography had been his hobby since childhood, Shevins carried his personal 35mm camera whenever he went into town or outside Seoul. He also served as the company photographer for ceremonies, formations, and holiday activities. This made him the logical choice to compile the farewell gift, *Remember?* The U.S. Army and South Korean government recognized the contributions of the 1st L&L soldiers during the war as well.

The 1st Loudspeaker & Leaflet Company, EUSAK, the first, and only tactical Psywar unit deployed to Korea, was awarded the Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citation and two U.S. Army Meritorious Service Citations for its distinguished service from 1950-1954. One soldier (Sergeant Lawrence O'Brien, Loudspeaker Team Chief with 7th Infantry Division) was awarded the Silver Star for gallantry in action in May 1950 that saved the life of commanding general, MG Claude Ferenbaugh, after he was ambushed. A number of Loudspeaker Team personnel received Bronze Stars for Valor, Air Medals, and Purple Hearts.²⁶ While several Loudspeaker Team members were wounded in action (WIA), only four 1st L&L soldiers were killed in action from 1950-1953. These fallen Korean War Psywarriors were honored by the US Army Special Operations Command during its memorialization ceremony on 24 May 2007. They are the legacy of the 1st Psychological Operations Battalion (Airborne) today. ▲



인민군 3사단 동지들이여
이것은 유엔군쪽으로 넘어온
분대장이 보내는 편지다



CPL Herbert Shevins photographed these Chinese POWs for EUSA G3 Psywar Leaflet 8420. They dressed in padded uniforms for the Psywar leaflet.



ROK minister's daughter who posed for a propaganda leaflet created a major flap for the 1st L&L Company.



1st L&L poster soliciting support for the Bookhan Mountain Orphanage from church groups in the United States.



Children from the Bookhan Mountain Orphans Music Academy pose for a contribution poster.



GEN Maxwell B. Taylor, EUSAK commander, visits 1st L&L in September 1953 to see the most advanced mobile color photolithograph printer in the Far East (L to R: GEN Taylor, COL Hall, G-3 Psywar, EUSAK, CPT Raymond E. Forbes, fourth company commander, and Mr. Kimbal, Davidson Printing Press Company Technical Representative).



ROK Army soldiers are awarded Psywar occupational specialties after one year on-the-job (OJT) training with the 1st L&L Company.



I Corps security awareness poster printed by the 1st L&L after the Armistice.



KATUSA (Korean Augmentation to U.S. Army) guard billets in the 1st L&L compound.

1ST L&L CO. CASUALTIES, KOREA, 1950-1954.

Corporal Joseph C. Ratti, Cook, Illinois, went missing in action (MIA) on 30 April 1951, while on a leaflet-dropping mission over North Korea. He was a Psywar leaflet "kicker" aboard a C-47D Skytrain transport, 21st Troop Carrier Squadron, the "Kyushu Gypsies," 374th Troop Carrier Wing, that was shot down in the vicinity of Wonsan. Presumed dead on 31 December 1953, CPL Ratti's status was changed to killed in action (KIA).

Private First Class David R. Cooper, Decatur, Georgia, a loudspeaker team member, was killed in action (KIA) on 16 July 1952, during an enemy 122mm mortar barrage.

Private Anthony E. Arezzo, Auburn, New York, was killed in action (KIA) on 15 June 1953, when his loudspeaker team was caught in an enemy mortar ambush along a road.

Private Bernard Almeida, Bristol, Rhode Island, went missing in action (MIA) on 6 July 1953, after a heavy Chinese mortar and ground assault on Pork Chop Hill. Declared dead on 7 July 1954, PVT Almeida's status was listed as killed in action (KIA).

*The U.S. Army Special Operations Command
Memorial Wall at Fort Bragg, N.C.*

*Ten boxcar loads of print paper erroneously
delivered to Seoul instead of Japan had
to be unloaded, moved to the 1st L & L,
stacked and covered in 48 hours to prevent
weather damage.*



Charles H. Briscoe has been the USASOC Command Historian since 2000. He earned his PhD from the University of South Carolina and is a retired Army special operations officer. Current research interests include Army special operations during the Korean War, in El Salvador, and Colombia.

Endnotes

- 1 COL Kenneth K. Hansen. *Psywar in Korea* (Washington, DC: Joint Subsidiary Activities Group, OJCS, 1960): 7, 26.
- 2 Hansen, *Psywar in Korea*, 26. MAJ Homer Caskey took the Technical Information Detachment overseas. After the TID was expanded to become the 1st L&L Company, it was subsequently commanded by Majors John T. Dabinett and Donald W. Osgood and Captains Herbert Avedon, Oliver W. Rodman, and Raymond E. Forbes
- 3 Department of the Army. Operational Research Office. Technical Memorandum ORO-T-3 (FEC). George S. Pettee, *US Psywar Operations in the Korean War* (23 January 1951): 29, "PSYWAR Hits Korean Enemy Right Where It Hurts the Most," *The Army Times*, 20 May 1953, and 1st L&L Company, EUSAK, APO 301, Seoul, Korea, Standing Operating Procedure (SOP) dated 10 August 1952, hereafter cited as 1st L&L Co. SOP.
- 4 Pettee, *US Psywar Operations in the Korean War*, 2, 7, 23, 24, 29, Hansen, *Psywar in Korea*, 26, 194, 196, and Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) Jay V. Russell, telephone interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 16 November 2004, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Ft Bragg, NC, hereafter cited by name and date. When war broke out in Korea, MAJ Alfred L. DiBella from the G-2 Psywar Branch, Special Projects Division, Supreme Command Allied Powers (General Douglas MacArthur's headquarters) in Tokyo was dispatched to Seoul. In January 1951, General Mathew Ridgway transferred responsibility for Psywar from G-2 to G-3 in EUSAK, where it became a G-3 Operations division rather than a special staff section. He increased the manning to eight officers and nine enlisted men, and named DiBella acting chief. Prior to that Majors DiBella and Edwin Rios, 1LT Fred W. Wilmot, and a master sergeant conducted the tactical Psywar campaign for EUSAK until 1st L&L Company was deemed combat operational in April 1951. Airborne and ground loudspeaker efforts were experimental. Only two trailer-mounted loudspeakers and two airborne loudspeakers had been in service. The 1st Cavalry Division lent its loudspeaker trailer to the 25th ID in the summer and fall of 1950. The U.S. Marines used their loudspeakers throughout the fall. Attempts to use them at the Chosin Reservoir in winter were unsuccessful. With the temperatures from -10 to -20F, the generator would not start. LTC (Retired) Fred W. Wilmot, telephone interviews by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 10 November 2004 and 29 November 2004, digital recordings, USASOC History Office Classified Files, hereafter cited by name and date respectively.
- 5 T/O&E 20-77, Loudspeaker and Leaflet Company, Army, 1 September 1950, hereafter T/O&E 20-77.
- 6 Change 1 to T/O&E 20-77 dated 24 April 1951; MSG (Retired) Joseph F. Lissberger, telephone interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 8 February 2007, El Paso, TX, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited by name and date.
- 7 Herbert Shevins interview, Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 21 February 2007, Longmont, CO, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited by name and date.
- 8 Shevins interview, 21 February 2007, and Shevins email to Briscoe, "Draft Article for Veritas," 13 September 2007.
- 9 Shevins interview, 21 February 2007.
- 10 Lissberger interview, 8 February 2007.
- 11 Lissberger and MSG (Retired) Francis D. Blanchard interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 22 May 2007, Fort Bragg, NC, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited by name and date.
- 12 MAJ (Retired) Ivan G. Worrell interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 12 April 2007, Sweetwater, TN, digital recording and Worrell interview by Dr. Briscoe, 22 May 2007, Fort Bragg, NC, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited by name and date; Duane D. Luhn interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 23 May 2007, Fort Bragg, NC, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC; Russell interview, 16 November 2004; Russell interview by Dr. Briscoe, 14 January 2005, Kingwood, TX, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited by name and date; MSG (Retired) Francis D. Blanchard interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 15 June 2005, Fort Bragg, NC, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited by name and date.
- 13 Eighth US Army. G3, PSYWAR Division, Seoul, Korea. "Weekly Loudspeaker 'Team Talk'" flyers, 14 April 1952 and 24 November 1952, MAJ Alan J. Dover Collection, U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center & School (USAJFKSWCS) Archives, Fort Bragg, NC; 1st L&L Co. SOP dated 10 August 1952, USAJFKSWCS Archives, Fort Bragg, NC; Lissberger and Blanchard interview, 22 May 2007.
- 14 1st L&L Co. SOP dated 10 August 1952.
- 15 CPT Herbert Avedon, Special Projects Branch, EUSAK G3 PSYWAR Division, memo to COL Hall dated 14 November 1952, subject: Psywar Commentary Nr. 1, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 16 Avedon memo to COL Hall dated 14 November 1952.
- 17 Avedon memo to COL Hall dated 14 November 1952.
- 18 Shevins interview, 21 February 2007.
- 19 Shevins interview, 21 February 2007.
- 20 Stephen E. Pease, *Psychological Warfare in Korea 1950-1953* (Harrisburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1992): 131-132, Robert F. Futrell, *The United States Air Force in Korea 1950-1953* (NY: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1961): 620, Rose Interview #1, and Hansen, *Psywar in Korea*, 313-314, 316. "Bedcheck Charlies" operated throughout the war, but low-level flights increased during the last six months when the front lines were static. North Koreans used the Polikarpov U-2/Po-2, a Soviet biplane dating from 1927, the Yakovlev Yak-18A, a low-wing aircraft, ancient Blochavidan Mbe-2, a pusher-type seaplane, as well as the Lavochkin La-9 and La-11 low-wing aircraft. The Soviets had used them all during WWII as liaison, ambulance, and night raider aircraft. Powered by large exposed radial engines and constructed mostly of wood, they were difficult to track on radar, too slow to intercept with jet aircraft, and noisy enough to harass ground troops. After the BCC flights destroyed an F-86 Sabrejet and several F-51 Mustangs on crowded forward airbases and some 15,000,000 gallons of aviation fuel and huge amounts of munitions stored at Inch'on they became a priority for the F4U-5N all-weather night fighter Corsairs of the 7th US Navy Fleet. Several night fighter Corsairs from VC-3 aboard the USS *Princeton* (CVA-37) were detached ashore to K-6 at Pyongtaek, Korea to intercept the BCC or "washing Machine Charlies" as the Navy referred to them. Lt Guy "Lucky Pierre" Bordelon, "Detachment Dog" was awarded the Silver Star and Navy Cross for destroying five BCC. He became "the Navy's first prop ace in Korea." James A. Field, Jr., *History of United States Naval Operations: Korea* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1962): 455; Robert F. Futrell, *The United States Air Force in Korea 1950-1953* (NY: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1961): 622-623; http://www.acepilots.com/korea_bordelon.html; LT Guy Bordelon interview in Donald Knox and Alfred Koppel, *The Korean War: The Concluding Volume of an Oral History: Uncertain Victory* (NY: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1988): 246-250.w
- 21 Lissberger interview, 8 February 2007; Lissberger and Blanchard interview, 22 May 2007; Shevins interview, 21 February 2007. Selecting different targets almost every night for two weeks in April 1953, the Communist airmen flew PO-2s, LA-11s, and Yak-18s against Chunchon, Kimpo, and EUSAK front-line troops. On the night of 26/27 May 1953, five to eight PO-2s dropped small bombs and mortar rounds over the Seoul area. June was filled with attacks: 15/16 June nine aircraft raided Seoul and shook President Syngman Rhee's mansion with bombs; 16/17 June some 15 PO-2s, LA-11s, and Yak-18s made the most damaging attack of the season, starting several fires in Seoul, one which destroyed five million gallons of fuel at Inch'on. These attacks took place during periods of bright moonlight. Futrell, *USAF in Korea 1950-1953*, 622.
- 22 Lissberger interview, 8 February 2007; Lissberger and Blanchard interview, 22 May 2007; Shevins interview, 21 February 2007.
- 23 Gerald A. Rose, May 1952, Korea, letter to parents, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Ft Bragg, NC.
- 24 "War Without Weapons," *Pacific Stars and Stripes* (17 March 1951); Hansen, *Psywar in Korea*, 59.
- 25 Shevins interview, 21 February 2007.
- 26 Charles H. Briscoe, "'Volunteering' for Combat: Loudspeaker Psywar in Korea," *Veritas*, 1:2, 57.



Republic of Korea Presidential
Unit Citation



U.S. Army Meritorious Unit
Insignia

CAMP MACKALL:

A History of Training

by Robert W. Jones, Jr.

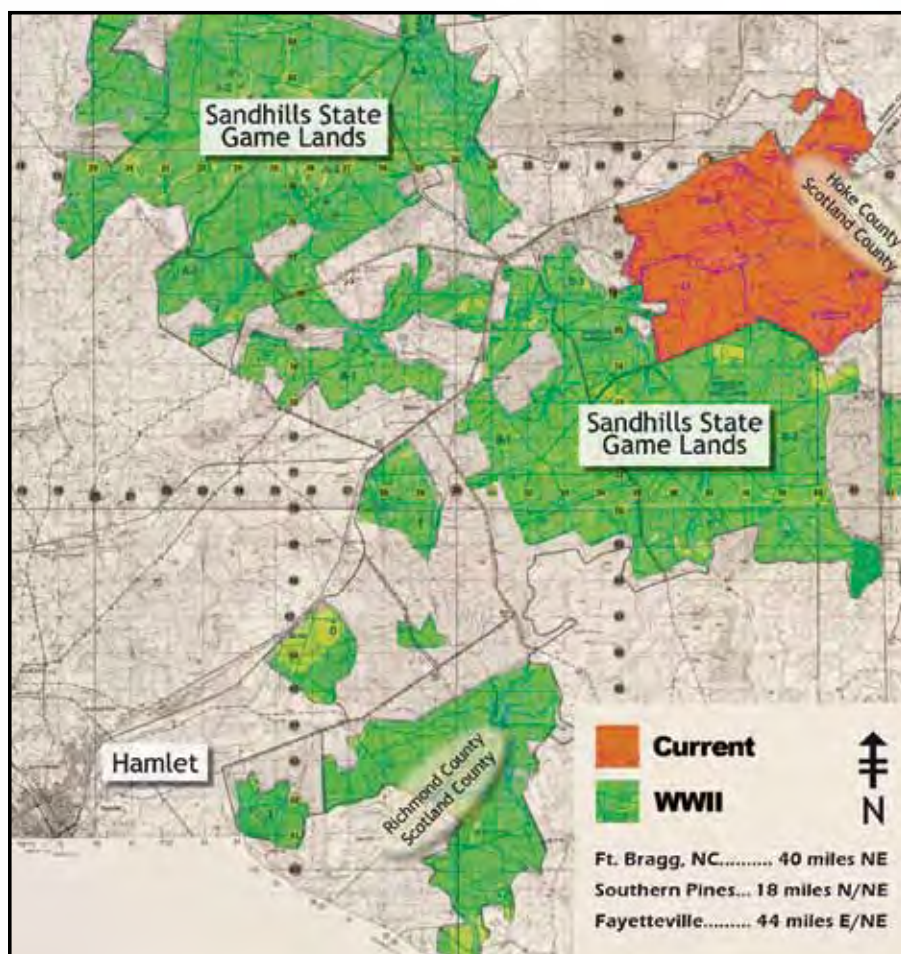
LOCATED in the North Carolina sandhills forty miles southwest from Fort Bragg is Camp Mackall. The post began as a separate U.S. Army training base during World War II. From 1943 to 1945 three airborne divisions formed and trained there. After the war Camp Mackall became a sub-post of Fort Bragg, where innumerable units have trained. With the creation of

U.S. Army Special Forces in 1952, Camp Mackall became one of its training areas. However, Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations forces also trained at the base. This photo essay does two things. It compares historical snapshots of Camp Mackall during World War II with current conditions. It also opens the “window” on Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations training being conducted there today. The scope of training at Camp Mackall during WWII was large.

On 8 November 1942, construction began on the Hoffman Airborne Camp. Within months more than 1,750 buildings were constructed. The vast majority of the buildings were one-story temporary construction made of rough pine plank siding and covered with tarpaper. The base had seven service clubs, two guesthouses, three libraries, sixteen post exchanges, twelve chapels, and a hospital. It became one of the larger towns in North Carolina. The post was divided into north and south cantonment areas with the Station Hospital between them.¹ The infrastructure was necessary to support over three divisions of soldiers.

Future airborne units began filling south cantonment area in January 1943. Cadre conducted basic and advanced infantry and artillery training at Camp Mackall while perfecting parachuting and glider operations.² Three airborne divisions

Map comparing the size of Camp Mackall during WWII to the present day.



US Army
Airborne Command
SSI



11th Airborne
Division SSI



17th Airborne
Division SSI



13th Airborne
Division SSI



SWCS
SSI



A tarpaper "theater of operations" building found throughout WWII training bases, such as Camp Mackall.

(the 11th, 13th and 17th Airborne Divisions) were formed and trained at Camp Mackall during World War II. The 82nd and 101st Airborne Divisions, while not formed at Camp Mackall, trained there before leaving for the European Theater. During the war a variety of units trained and conducted operational tests at Camp Mackall. After the war, Camp Mackall was used as an airborne maneuver area by XVIII Airborne Corps units. In the 1950s, Camp Mackall was a training site for the newly created Special Forces. However, it fell into disrepair until the 1980s. In the post Vietnam period the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School (USAJFKSWCS) built the Rowe Training Facility for Special Forces training.³ Other USAJFKSWCS courses also began using Camp Mackall as a training site.

A lesser-known part of Camp Mackall history is the Civil Affairs and PSYOP training conducted by the members of 3rd Battalion, 1st Special Warfare Training Group (Airborne). The training site for CA and PSYOP went through a series of evolutions since 1999. The first permanent CA/PSYOP training site was built by 18C Special Forces engineer sergeant students as a practicum during the "Q-course" (each building was constructed by a different class). CA and PSYOP cadre began using these temporary facilities as a command post and training area in late 1999 until a permanent compound could be constructed.

The present training site was constructed in stages from 2004 to 2007 to support capstone-training exercises for the Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations officer and non-commissioned officer courses.⁴ The CA/PSYOP training area has three individual sites. The largest is Forward Operating Base (FOB) Freedom, built to replicate a typical FOB anywhere in the world. The second is Freedom Village, a collection of buildings currently made to resemble a town in the Middle East. A contracted civilian population of role players enhances training. The third training site is the Soldiers Urban Reaction Facility (SURF). Here, role players challenge the students with a series of situational dilemmas.⁵ These scenarios serve as the culminating exercise for CA and PSYOP officer and NCO training.

After classroom training at Fort Bragg the CA and PSYOP students undergo a 10-day, three-phase culmination exercise. Named "Operation CERTAIN TRUST," the exercise is focused on preparing the soldiers for

operational assignments. Supported from Forward Operating Base (FOB) Freedom, the 214 hours of training in Operation CERTAIN TRUST is divided into 3 phases.

The operation begins with a 36-hour Situational Training Exercise (STX) to introduce physical and mental stress (Phase I). Next, in Phase II, they go to the Soldiers Urban Reaction Facility (SURF) to solve a series of problem based scenarios. The CA and PSYOP soldiers have separate challenges. The scenarios allow the cadre to evaluate individual and collective performance in a controlled, but realistic operational environment. Each student team responds to four different scenarios. Contracted male and female Middle Eastern and African nationals serve as role players, adding more realism to the scenarios. Contracted "Enhancement Coaches," all with operational military experience, accompany student teams to provide feedback on tactics, techniques, and procedures employed to solve the problem. Each dilemma is evaluated by an Enhancement Coach who, combined with coaching and mentoring, conducts an after action review for the teams. After successfully completing Phase II the soldiers move into a Field Training Exercise at Freedom Village and in the North Carolina counties surrounding Camp Mackall (Hoke, Lee, Montgomery, Moore, Richmond, Robeson, and Scotland).⁶ While Freedom Village is the focus of the exercise the counties provide an opportunity to assess real world public facilities. Though very involved in training at Camp Mackall few soldiers know anything about its history.

Most soldiers are unaware of the historic connection of the base to WWII. The FOB Freedom operations center tent sits where the former WWII Station Hospital was located. Freedom Village occupies the original hospital steam plant. The SURF was built where the hospital supply area was once located.

This photo essay is just a "snapshot" of ongoing training at Camp Mackall. The historical snapshots of the post connect yesterday to today. This photo essay has a secondary motive, to prompt veterans to furnish vignettes, photographs, and documents that pertain to Camp Mackall. The current contracted history project for 2008 is a history of Camp Mackall, WWII to the present.

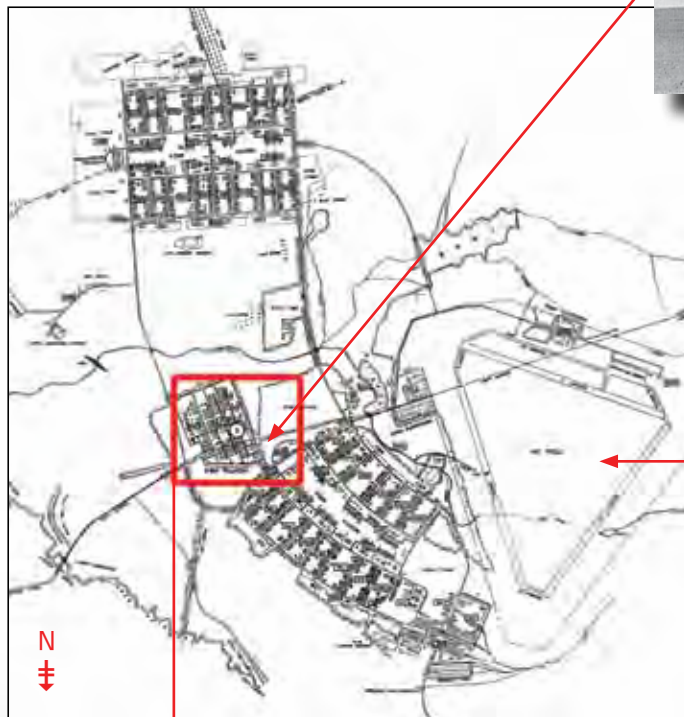
On 8 February 1943, General Order Number 6 renamed the Hoffman Airborne Camp to Camp Mackall in honor of Private John Thomas (Tommy) Mackall. While serving in the 2nd Battalion, 503rd Parachute Infantry Regiment during Operation TORCH, the Allied invasion of North Africa, Mackall was mortally wounded when his aircraft was attacked by French Vichy fighters as it landed near Oran on 8 November 1942. Seven paratroopers were killed and several were wounded, including Mackall. He was evacuated by air to a British hospital on Gibraltar where he died on 12 November 1942.

CAMP MACKALL AREA 1945

Aerial view of Camp Mackall taken on 18 April 1945. This photo shows the northern cantonment area used primarily for logistics. The hospital area is marked.



The headquarters of the Station Hospital with some of the local Red Cross volunteers.



Paratroopers jump at Camp Mackall during training. The "parapack" equipment bundles were dropped from the belly of the aircraft while the men exited from the troop door.

Obscured in the ground haze above the hospital is the southern cantonment area where the Airborne Divisions lived and trained. Part of that area is now Rhine-Luzon drop zone.

CAMP MACKALL AREA 2007



The centerpiece of the CA and PSYOP training area, called FOB Freedom, is the "Big Tent." The tent is located on the site of the WWII Station Hospital.



PSYOP soldiers conduct a tactical loudspeaker mission at Camp Mackall.



The Camp Mackall sign welcomes visitors to "The Home of the Airborne during WWII."



A group of CA students returning from a training mission.



RTF



Aerial view of Camp Mackall taken in May 2007. In the center of the photo is the Rowe Training Facility (RTF). The FOB Freedom area is outlined in red.



OPERATION CERTAIN 'TRUST'

PHASE I: Situational Training Exercise

STX

Aerial view of Forward Operating Base (FOB) Freedom in May 2007.



Ground views of the FOB.



During the STX a group of students plan for their next phase, the SURF.

Operation CERTAIN TRUST is the culminating exercise for Civil Affairs (CA) and Psychological Operations (PSYOP) courses. Phase I of the exercise begins at Forward Operating Base (FOB) Freedom, which replicates a FOB that could be found anywhere in the world. The outer perimeter includes defensive positions and watch towers. The medium sized "expeditionary" tents provide work space and living areas for the soldiers while in the field. The center of the FOB is the large tent that the students use for work space and a briefing area. The main tent at FOB Freedom is located on the site of the WWII Station Hospital headquarters. The Situational Training Exercise (STX) imposes mental (planning) and physical (road marches) stress before the next phase.



PSYOP students take a rest break after a roadmarch. In 10 minutes this group will enter phase II, the SURF.

PHASE II: Soldiers Urban Reaction Facility

SURF



A group of PSYOP students has just completed a series of road marches to stress them physically and mentally before beginning Phase II of the exercise. They are being briefed by Mr. Drew Borsz, an instructor in 3rd Battalion. In a few minutes they must prepare a plan of action before conducting their mission in the SURF.

External view of the Soldier Urban Reaction Facility (SURF).



The Soldier Urban Reaction Facility (SURF) is a new addition to CA and PSYOP training. The facility was built by U.S. Army engineers stationed at Fort Bragg who practiced their carpentry skills before overseas deployment. The SURF provides a unique training opportunity for soldiers. The facility resembles a small government compound found in many parts of the developing world. Students go through a series of adaptive learning scenarios, with role players providing realism. The scenarios are adapted to meet Army deployment needs and to prepare for specific missions.



Two contracted role players prepare for a scenario with an Enhancement Coach (in dark shirt).

PHASE II: Soldiers Urban Reaction Facility

SURF



Internal view of the SURF courtyard where several of the role players relax between student groups.

In the SURF each scenario is recorded. The students' responses during the scenario can be replayed as a learning tool. It is better to learn from mistakes during training than during a deployment.



In this adaptive learning scenario a CA team meets with the local Imam. Two experienced role players adjust the flow of the scenario based on guidance from cadre and the Enhancement Coaches.

In another scenario a PSYOP team meets with local officials. Afterward the Enhancement Coach conducts an after action review.



PHASE III: Field Training Exercise

FTX



During the scenario the students have to cope with an armed population that many will face in Afghanistan or Iraq. The mere presence of weapons is not an indication of hostility but the soldiers have to keep alert and maintain situational awareness. The Freedom Village is located astride the steam plant for the WWII hospital.



Students meet with Freedom Village officials, a tribal elder, the Imam, and the police chief.



At the village mosque in Freedom Village role players relax between groups of students.

The final component is the Field Training Exercise (FTX). The majority of the FTX takes place in Freedom Village. The original buildings in Freedom Village were modified by 3rd Battalion soldiers for a population of native role players. Like the SURF, students go through a series of adaptive learning scenarios during the FTX. The contracted role players come from various Middle Eastern and African countries, including Djibouti, Iraq, Lebanon, and Egypt. His/her role player has refined his/her persona for the scenario and plays that part throughout the exercise. The village's configuration and the role players can be changed to a different regional focus to meet operational needs.

Robert W. Jones Jr. is a historian assigned to the USASOC History Office and is a Lieutenant Colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve. A graduate of the University of Washington, he earned his M.A. from Duke University and his MS from Troy State University. Current research interests include Special Forces in Vietnam 1960–1966, military government and civil affairs, special operations in World War II, Operation JUST CAUSE, and Operation ENDURING FREEDOM.

Endnotes

- 1 Tom McCallum and Lowell W. Stevens, Sr., A History of Camp Mackall, North Carolina (unpublished manuscript), USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 2 **The reader should remember that over half of a WWII Airborne Division was glider borne.**
- 3 Named after Colonel James "Nick" Rowe, a Special Forces officer held for five years as a POW in Vietnam before escaping. Terrorists in the Philippines murdered Colonel Rowe in April 1989; <http://www.bragg.army.mil/18abn/CampMackall.htm>; James N. Rowe, Five Years To Freedom: The True Story of a Vietnam POW (New York: Little & Brown Co., 1971).
- 4 "3rd Battalion, 1st Special Warfare Training Group (Airborne) Command Briefing, 31 July 2007," 3rd Battalion, 1st Special Warfare Training Group (Airborne), USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC; Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Qualification and MOS-T Course; Andrew Borsz, Instructor, 3rd Battalion, 1st Special Warfare Training Group (Airborne), interview by Lieutenant Colonel Robert W. Jones Jr., 13 August 2007, Fort Bragg, NC, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 5 "3rd Battalion, 1st Special Warfare Training Group (Airborne) Command Briefing, 31 July 2007," 3rd Battalion, 1st Special Warfare Training Group (Airborne), USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC; Borsz interview.
- 6 "3rd Battalion, 1st Special Warfare Training Group (Airborne) Command Briefing, 31 July 2007," 3rd Battalion, 1st Special Warfare Training Group (Airborne), USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC; Borsz interview.

The OSS

A Primer on the Special Operations Branches and Detachments of the Office of Strategic Services

CONSIDERED as a legacy unit of the U.S. Army Special Operations Forces, the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) has assumed almost mythical stature since World War II. Several OSS veterans, among them Colonel Aaron Bank, Lieutenant Colonel Jack T. Shannon, and Majors Herbert R. Brucker and Caesar J. Civitella brought unconventional warfare (UW) tactics and techniques to Special Forces in the early 1950's. It should be remembered, however, that the short-lived OSS (1942 to 1945) had two basic missions: its primary one was to collect, analyze, and disseminate foreign intelligence; its secondary one was to conduct unconventional warfare. The first, executed primarily by the Research and Analysis branch (R&A), was considered the most important during the war.

It is the second mission of UW, however, that has received the most attention since WWII. It was this element of the OSS that provided the most exciting stories and which was cloaked by an aura of secrecy and mystery. These UW missions have become the subject of numerous books and several films. This article is designed to serve as a primer on the UW elements of the OSS. It is not an exhaustive look at the OSS, nor does it address every OSS function or branch. Its intent is to provide the reader with a basic understanding of what missions the separate OSS branches had, what the main operational efforts were, and where they took place geographically.

Although never made official, the "spearhead" is regarded as the symbol of the OSS (Office of Strategic Services.)

FROM COI to OSS: The Beginning, 1941-1942



MG William J. "Wild Bill" Donovan was the head of the COI and the OSS. Both the COI and the OSS, like the later CIA, were civilian organizations.

On 11 July 1941, President Franklin D. Roosevelt created the Coordinator of Information (COI). Its mission was to collect, analyze, and disseminate foreign intelligence. William J. "Wild Bill" Donovan, a WWI Medal of Honor recipient and a prominent lawyer, was selected by the president to head the COI.

The Research and Analysis (R&A) branch was the most visible element of the COI. It used notable historians, economists, geographers, anthropologists, and subject matter experts to research and prepare reports for senior policy makers. Walt W. Rostow, Ralph J. Bunche, and Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. served in R&A. Covert intelligence collection was also done to support potential paramilitary actions. Another COI task was to conduct overt and covert psychological warfare. As a civilian agency with access to unencumbered funding, the COI could operate more freely than the military services. After America entered the war in December 1941, COI established groups to collect intelligence and conduct sabotage in North Africa and Burma. These expanded capabilities provided better, more up to date information for strategic planners and helped to formulate propaganda campaigns. This done, special operations teams would be inserted behind enemy lines to advise and assist in the formation, equipping, training, and employment of guerrilla groups. Commando raids would then help conventional forces gain a foothold in enemy territory. This was a new way for the U.S. to conduct warfare.



In June 1942, COI was disbanded. Responsibility for overt propaganda was assigned to the newly created Office of War Information (OWI), which also took control of the COI-created radio broadcast "Voice of America." Covert activities were assigned to the new Office of Strategic Services (OSS). Although the earliest contributions of OSS were intelligence gathering and analysis for senior policy makers, the paramilitary operations have garnered the most interest in our time. The following sections offer a brief look into the special operations of the OSS, which influenced the formation of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and Army Special Operations Forces today.

One of the most significant contributions of the COI and OSS was the work of the Research and Analysis branch. This element compiled intelligence and information to provide the executive branch and other intelligence consumers with current products, such as this one on the Japanese government.

SECRET INTELLIGENCE

The Secret Intelligence (SI) branch of OSS, an original part of the Coordinator of Information (COI), was to obtain “by secret means information which cannot otherwise be secured and which is not elsewhere available.”¹ In practice, this meant intelligence collection performed by agents, known as human intelligence (HUMINT) today. Although not as well known as the direct-action SO elements in OSS, SI agents faced incredible danger. Small SI teams gathered information by espionage. They established “nets” of local informants or spies to collect specific information, such as enemy military unit locations.

SI personnel operated alone or in two to four person teams in enemy-controlled and neutral countries. They were particularly active in France, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, and French Indo-China (now Vietnam). Twenty-nine SI teams under the SUSSEX program were sent into occupied-France. Only three of the SUSSEX teams—COLERE, FILAN, and SALAUD—were captured and executed by the Germans. Forty-one agents under the PROUST program went into occupied France; they only lost one person. One of the most remarkable SI successes was achieved by Allen W. Dulles, who later directed the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). On 2 May 1945, he arranged the separate surrender of German forces in Italy. Although this occurred just six days before the surrender of Germany, Dulles’ effort saved many Allied lives.



OSS SI station chief Allen W. Dulles operated in neutral Switzerland. He was Director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) from 1953-61.



Suspected Chinese collaborators await interrogation by Team BUICK, China 1945.



In this painting by Jeff Bass, SI agent Virginia Hall transmits in France, 1944. She was later decorated with the Distinguished Service Cross for her extraordinary heroic efforts.



SI agents board P-563, a Maritime Unit fast-boat, off the Burma Coast in 1945. The SI agents of OSS Detachment 404 had successfully infiltrated the Japanese-held coast.

SPECIAL OPERATIONS

Set up as the American equivalent to the British Special Operations Executive (SOE), the Special Operations (SO) branch was to "effect physical subversion of the enemy," in three distinct phases: infiltration and preparation, sabotage and subversion, and direct support to guerrilla, resistance, or commando units.² After the 7 December 1941 Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, OSS Chief William J. Donovan wrote to President Franklin D. Roosevelt, stressing the need for a special operations element able to function "as an essential part of the strategic plan," that could sow "the dragon's teeth in those territories from which we withdraw ... that the aid of native chiefs be obtained, the loyalty of the inhabitants cultivated ... and guerrilla bands of bold, and daring men organized and installed."³ This was to be done with "men calculatingly reckless with disciplined daring, who are trained for aggressive action ... it will mean a return to our old tradition of the scouts, the raiders, and the rangers."⁴

Based on Donovan's vision, the OSS developed an SO branch, clearly modeled on the British Commandos, to increase "the enemy's misery and weaken his will to resist."⁵ SO operatives became the first OSS personnel to conduct combat operations beginning in North Africa

and Burma in 1942. SO personnel and elements later served in China, France, Greece, Italy, Scandinavia, Thailand, Yugoslavia, and other locations. In German-occupied France, SO worked with the British SOE. Prior to the Normandy Invasion, the country had been blanketed with SO and SOE operatives. Once dropped into an occupied area, SO personnel linked up with resistance groups, identified their operational needs, arranged drop zones, and then radioed for supply drops. The OSS/SOE supply effort for Europe was massive. The SO resupply center at Area H in England packed more than 3,335 tons of supplies, including 75,000 small arms and 35,000 grenades, into aerial delivery containers for resistance groups in Belgium, Denmark, France, Poland, and Norway.⁶ Many of these night airdrops were made by the 492/801st Bomb Group or "Carpetbaggers," a U.S. Army Air Forces unit whose mission was to support covert operations in Europe. In France alone, some 300,000 resistance fighters were armed by airdrop before D-Day.⁷

The SO branch was the genesis for many other branches of OSS: Research and Development (R&D), the Maritime Unit (MU) and the Operational Groups (OG).⁸ Perhaps the best known SO endeavors were in the Allied Project JEDBURGH, and Detachment 101, which began as an SO mission in Burma. The Special Operations branch of OSS pioneered many of the Unconventional Warfare (UW), Counter-Insurgency (COIN), and Foreign Internal Defense (FID) tactics and techniques used by today's U.S. Army Special Operations Forces.



Top Right Photo: 1LT Herbert Brucker is decorated with the Distinguished Service Cross for his actions on Team HERMIT in France, 1944.



Top Left Photo: Personnel at the Area H, the SO packing station, prepare aerial delivery containers for loading. Area H was in Holme, England, and among other teams, supplied SO, Jedburgh, and Operational Groups in German-occupied Europe.



Photo to Left: CPT Robert L. Ford and his interpreter, "Peter," in German-occupied Greece, 1943-1944.

Below: CPT Walter R. Mansfield of Team MUSKRAT instructs Chinese troops on the use of the Thompson sub machinegun, China 1945.



JEDBURGHS: D-Day 1944 and Beyond

The mission of the Jedburgh teams was to supplement existing SO/SOE "circuits," to help organize and arm the resistance, arrange supply drops, procure intelligence, provide liaison between the Allies and the Resistance, and to take part in sabotage operations. Project Jedburgh was a joint Allied program, with the OSS Special Operations (SO) branch, the British Special Operations Executive (SOE), and the French *Bureau Central de Renseignements et d'Action* (BCRA) involved. Eighty-three American, 90 British, 103 French, 5 Belgian, and 5 Dutch personnel were extensively trained in paramilitary techniques for Jedburgh missions. Ninety-three Jedburgh teams parachuted into France and eight went into The Netherlands.⁹ A model team consisted of one French, one British, and one American serviceman. Every team had at least one officer and a radioman, but team sizes varied from two to four men.

So as not to alert the Germans to the exact invasion date, Supreme Commander, Allied Forces Europe, General Dwight D. Eisenhower, did not permit Jedburgh teams to parachute into occupied-France until the night of 5/6 June 1944. For the next three months thereafter, Jedburgh teams were extremely successful in supporting attacks on enemy lines of communication and reducing destruction of key infrastructure by the retreating Germans. Their actions, like those of the OSS Operational Groups (OG), forced the Germans to divert significant military assets away from major battlefronts. As Allied forces overran the Jedburgh areas of operations, their missions were terminated.

Like many OSS veterans, several former Jedburghs had successful post-war careers. William E. Colby, who



Members of Team RONALD prepare to jump into occupied France on 4 August 1944. LT Shirley R. Trumps (in foreground) and T/SGT Elmer B. Esch (behind Trumps) were Americans, while Lieutenant Georges Deseilligny, facing the camera, was French.

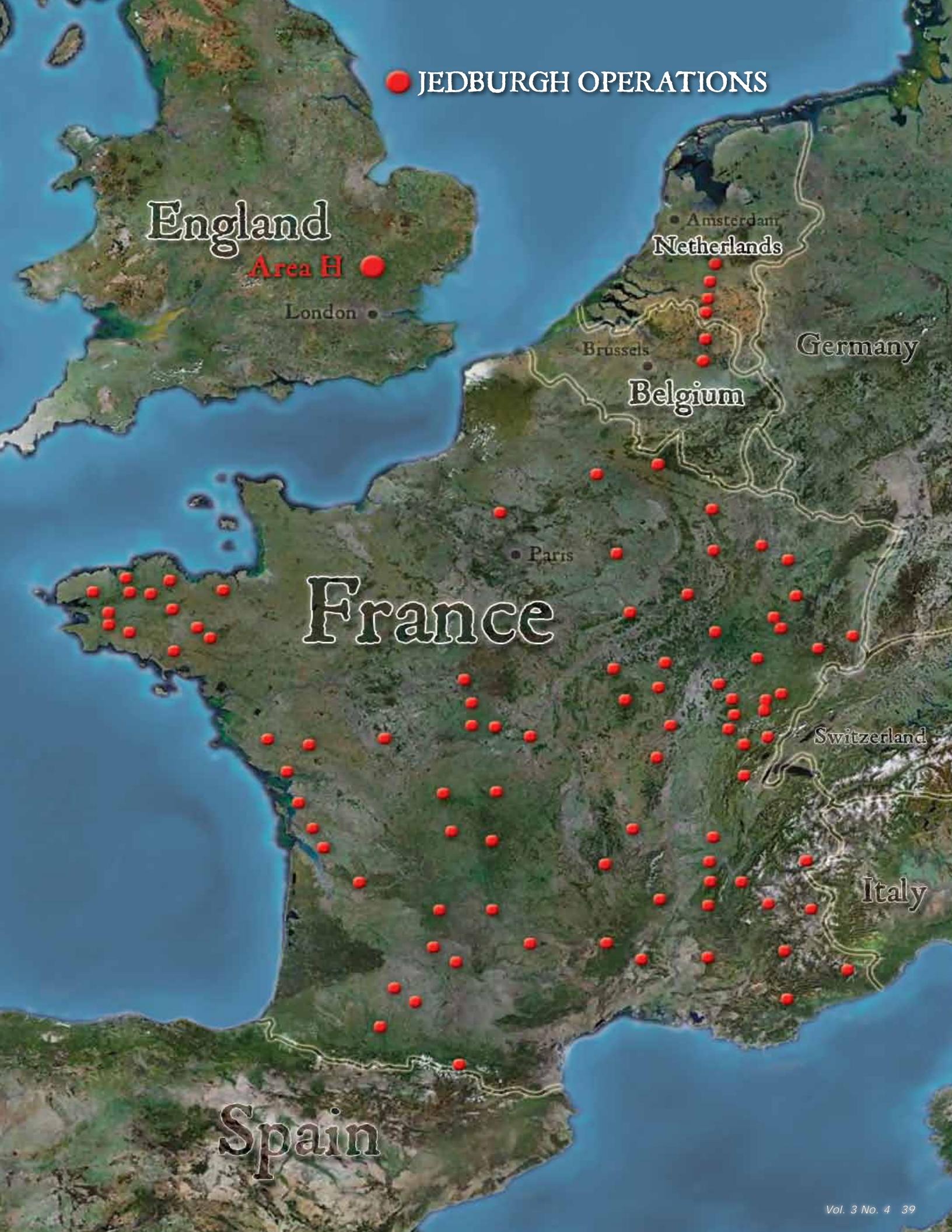
also commanded the Norwegian OG, served as the CIA Director from 1973-1975. Major General John K. Singlaub led the Studies and Observation Group (SOG) in Vietnam from 1966-1968. The Jedburgh with the closest connection to Army Special Forces was Colonel Aaron Bank, first Director of Special Forces (SF) and Commander of the first operational SF group, the 10th SFG. Many of the tactics and techniques used by Jedburgh teams were adopted for training early Special Forces in the 1950s.



The unofficial Special Force wing was worn by the Jedburghs. This insignia was also worn by some Operational Group (OG) Teams in France.

Jedburgh teams suit up in England prior to boarding a "Carpetbagger" B-24 Liberator drop aircraft, August 1944.

● JEDBURGH OPERATIONS



England

Area H ●

London ●

Amsterdam
Netherlands

Brussels

Belgium

Germany

Paris

France

Switzerland

Italy

Spain

OPERATIONAL GROUPS

The multi-faceted mission of the Operational Groups was to organize, train, and equip local resistance organizations, and to conduct “hit and run” missions against enemy-controlled roads, railways, and strong points, or to prevent their destruction by retreating enemy forces. Major General William J. Donovan believed that qualified soldiers with language skills and cultural backgrounds could be found among ethnic



Members of Greek OG Group IV coordinate with Bulgarian soldiers in Macedonia in October, 1944.



OG Team LAFAYETTE in August 1944. Many of these men later served on the SEWANEE mission in North Italy, March-May 1945. Caesar J. Civitella, an original member of U.S. Army Special Forces, is in the middle row far right.



Chinese paratrooper trainees and their OG instructors prior to their first mass tactical jump, China 1945.

groups in the United States. These soldiers could then be inserted as a team into enemy-occupied territory and successfully operate as small guerilla bands. Unlike OSS Special Operations (SO) teams, the Operational Groups (OGs) always operated in military uniform. They were trained in infantry tactics, guerilla warfare, foreign weapons, demolition, parachuting, and had attached medical personnel. A country-specific OG had four officers and thirty enlisted men. But in practice, sections sent into the field were often half that size.

OGs were active in Burma, China, France, Greece, Italy, Norway, and Yugoslavia. In the Mediterranean Theater, the OGs were controlled by the 2671st Special Reconnaissance Battalion, Separate (Provisional) and were divided into regional sections. The OGs were first employed in Italy in September 1943. Eventually thirty teams were sent into occupied Italy. In Greece, eight OG teams operated from April to November 1944. OG teams also conducted operations against the Dalmatian coastal islands from January to October 1944. OGs, like the Jedburghs, were not dropped into occupied-France until after D-Day, 6 June 1944. Twenty-one OG teams supported subsequent Allied landings at Normandy and the invasion of Southern France. Two OG teams served in Norway from March to June 1945. In the Far East, OG personnel were parceled out to Detachment 101 teams, or worked with the OSS Maritime Unit conducting OG operations along the Arakan coast of Burma. Many OG personnel were sent to China in 1945 to organize and train the first of twenty Chinese airborne units, called “Commandos.” Although the war ended before all the units could be trained, several Commandos with their OG “advisors” conducted operations against the Japanese before the final surrender.

The OGs accounted for thousands of enemy killed and captured, destroyed numerous bridges, locomotives and rail lines, and caused the diversion of large numbers of enemy troops. The 2671st and its OGs received a Presidential Unit Citation. Detachment 101 in Burma received the only other one awarded to the OSS. The lasting legacy of the OGs is found in Operational Detachments Alpha (ODA) of today’s Special Forces.



Unofficial patch worn by the Greek Operational Group. In the Mediterranean Theater, the OGs of the 2671st were divided into “companies.” Company A was the Italian OG, Company B was the French OG, while Company C was composed of two separate elements; the Yugoslav OG and the Greek OG.

● OG OPERATIONS IN EUROPE

NORWEGIAN OG



SPOKANE



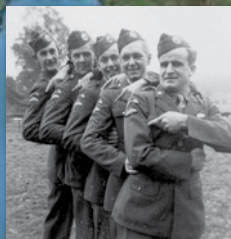
SOLTA ISLAND RAID



CHRISTOPHER



PATRICK



GREEK GROUP IV



MORALE OPERATIONS

The OSS Morale Operations (MO) branch produced and disseminated “black” propaganda to destabilize enemy governments and encourage resistance movements at the strategic and tactical levels. OSS Director William J. Donovan believed that “persuasion, penetration, and intimidation” were modern day counterparts to “sapping and mining in the siege warfare of former days.”¹⁰

MO designed and printed leaflets, spread false rumors, and produced radio broadcasts aimed at Axis and enemy-occupied countries. Radio broadcasts against the Germans supposedly came from a clandestine station in France, but actually originated in England.

The broadcasts were designed to be entertaining in order to get enemy soldiers to listen. The propaganda was interspersed throughout the programs. The “entertainment” portion included popular songs in German, such as “Lili Marlene,” recorded for MO by Marlene Dietrich.¹¹

Operation SAUERKRAUT was highly successful. Released prisoners of war agreed to slip behind their lines in German uniform to disseminate MO leaflets and false rumors in north Italy. One leaflet announced that Field Marshal Albert Kesselring [the German Commanding General], was resigning his post because he believed the war lost. Kesselring had to formally deny the announcement. Operation CORNFLAKES filled German mailbags with personal letters containing MO propaganda. These decoy mailbags were dropped by Allied aircraft during attacks on enemy rail yards. The hope was that the Germans would think the scattered mailbags were real and put them through their postal system. MO was so effective in Italy that an estimated 10,000 enemy troops surrendered or deserted.¹² For these and other efforts, MO is a part of today’s Psychological Operations legacy.

Morale Operations produced pamphlets with anti-Japanese and German messages.

MO members clown for the camera in their printshop, China 1945.



MARITIME UNIT



CPT Christian J. Lambertsen invented the LARU and other devices for MU. Dr. Lambertsen had a distinguished post-war career in environmental medicine, a field he pioneered after WWII.

The Maritime Unit's mission was to infiltrate agents and supply resistance groups by sea, conduct maritime sabotage, and to develop specialized maritime surface and subsurface equipment and devices. The Maritime Unit (MU) grew out of the Special Operations (SO) aquatic training requirement when it became apparent that the OSS needed a specialized amphibious capability. Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Navy, and Army personnel helped MU pioneer a special operations maritime capability.



The LARU underwater rebreather

The Maritime Unit operated in several theaters. In the Mediterranean, a fleet of hired Greek wooden fishing vessels—called *caiques*—covertly supported OSS agents in Albania, Greece, and Yugoslavia. After Italy surrendered, the MU and the San Marco battalion, an elite Italian special operations naval unit, operated against the Germans. In the Far East, the MU operated in conjunction with an Operational Group to attack Japanese forces on the Arakan coast of Burma. They jointly conducted reconnaissance missions on the Japanese-held coast, sometimes penetrating several miles up enemy-controlled rivers.

The MU was a special operations pioneer. In addition to being an early maritime warfare force, it developed or used several innovative devices, including an inflatable surfboard, a two-man kayak, and limpet mines that attached to the hull of a ship. Dr. Christian J. Lambertsen, then a U.S. Army captain, developed the Lambertsen Rebreathing Unit (LARU), an early underwater breathing device. The Lambertsen unit permitted a swimmer to remain underwater for several hours and to approach targets undetected because the LARU did not emit telltale air bubbles. The LARU was later refined, adapted, and the technology used by the U.S. Army, U.S. Navy, and NASA. The Army Special Forces Underwater Operations School at Key West, Florida, the home of Special Forces maritime operations, draws its roots from the Maritime Unit and Dr. Christian Lambertsen is remembered as the "Father of Military Underwater Operations."



An MU swimmer negotiates anti-submarine concertina wire nets during underwater training.

The P-564, an MU fastboat under the command of 1LT Walter L. Mess.

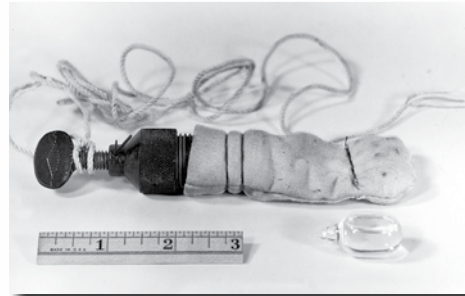


RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

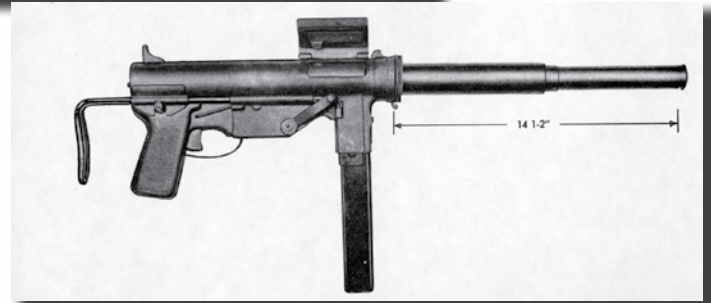
The mission of the Research and Development (R&D) branch was to develop devices to help undercover OSS agents, enhance intelligence gathering, or to facilitate sabotage operations. Like “Q” in the James Bond movies, the OSS R&D branch developed or contracted for the fabrication of special weapons and devices. The branch cooperated extensively with the British, and in many cases refined their clandestine issue items. These specialized items were primarily used by members of the Secret Intelligence and Special Operations branches.

The most critical items developed by R&D were special explosive and incendiary devices to destroy enemy equipment, vehicles, and infrastructure. These products ranged from limpet mines to sink ships to exploding candles and an explosive flour. “Aunt Jemima” flour could actually be baked and eaten in an emergency. R&D also developed chemical and pressure activated firing devices and clock timers that enabled an agent to set an explosive charge, and leave knowing that it would later activate.

R&D branch products ranged the gamut. They included the infamous cyanide-filled “L” capsule, which an agent could bite if captured to avoid revealing information under torture. Other “spy” items included a miniature camera that looked like a matchbox and a lock picking kit folded up like a small pocketknife. As one would expect, several weapons had silencers—the High Standard .22 pistol and M3 submachine “Grease” gun. Some of these were later used by Special Forces in Vietnam.



The OSS “Dog Drag” was designed to confuse tracking dogs. When crushed, the glass vial emitted a noxious odor.



The silenced M3 submachine “Grease” gun was used primarily in the Far East during WWII and later by U.S. Army Special Forces in Vietnam.



Designed to resemble a common box of matches, the OSS Matchbox Camera was supplied to operatives working behind the lines.

Research and Development experimented with underwater technologies before that mission was assigned to the Maritime Unit in 1943.



COMMUNICATIONS BRANCH

The mission of the Communications Branch was to recruit and train military and civilian radio operators at OSS training camps and to develop radios and communications devices tailored to specific assignments. The branch had its genesis in the COI period, but did not become a separate OSS entity until 22 September 1942.¹³ Mastering the technical aspects of OSS-unique clandestine communications equipment, developing training programs focused on operating, maintaining, and repairing this equipment in the field, and supporting specific needs of the operational branches required an element specifically dedicated to OSS communications requirements.

The Communications Branch trained personnel in a ten-week program that included radio maintenance, Morse code, cryptography, and communications procedures and security. OSS communicators were trained at OSS Areas C [Prince William Forest Park, VA], M [Camp McDowell-Napierville, IL], and on Catalina Island, CA. Trainees at these camps were Communications Branch recruits and designated radio operators from the SI, SO, and OG branches. The Communications Branch was also responsible for providing communications and radio familiarization training at other OSS training camps operated by the OSS Schools and Training Branch. Subsections of the Communications Branch researched and developed mission-specific communications devices, such as the SSTR-1 Transmitter-Receiver. The SSTR-1 was popularly known as the "suitcase" radio because of its most common method of concealment. Another item was the SSTC-502/SSTR-6, popularly known as the "Joan-Eleanor." The SSTC-502 ("Joan") was a 3 1/2 pound hand held radio that ran on compact long-life batteries, eliminating the need for a heavy charger. The SSTR-6 ("Eleanor") was emplaced in an aircraft. This revolutionary system, developed late in 1944, allowed the ground operator to talk with OSS personnel in an aircraft thousands of feet up and miles away from their location, greatly reducing the chances of detection.

The communicators were the "unsung" members of the clandestine service, providing critical command and control nodes. They worked in every theater that the OSS operated in and operated the radios for groups and teams. Communications to elements behind enemy lines was critical. Radios were used to arrange resupply, coordinate field operations, and transmit time-sensitive intelligence. Radio personnel staffed twenty-six OSS message centers in fifteen countries. These centers served as the OSS information clearing houses, receiving messages from the field teams, relaying them to commanders and OSS headquarters, and issued orders and instructions to groups in the field. U.S. Army Special Forces realized the critical need for communications specialists with advanced training at all levels—ODA, ODB, ODC, and the Group. The SF communications sergeant, MOS 18 Echo designation, fills that need.



A Communications Branch instructor demonstrates a radio to an OSS recruit at Area C.

1SG Berent Friele sending a message at SO Team JACKAL, China, 1945. Friele had previously been the radio operator of Jedburgh Team GERALD in France 1944.



The Communications staff of OSS Detachment 101 in Burma, 1945.



Communications personnel coordinated supply drops to the field, such as this one in north Burma in 1944.

The OSS in Asia

OSS operations in the Asia covered a huge geographic area with dramatically different climate and worked with numerous indigenous groups. The OSS in the Asia was unique in that it was separated into Detachments, unlike OSS in Europe.



Detachment 101 was established under the OSS predecessor, the Coordinator of Information (COI) in 1942 at Nazira, India. Detachment 101 was the OSS element that conducted operations in Burma, and was so named because the COI did not want the British to know that it was the only existing unit of its type at the time. Detachment 101 primarily worked in north Burma for the Northern Combat Area Command (NCAC). Other OSS elements in the Asia followed an incremental numbering scheme starting with Detachment 101.



Detachment 202 based in Chungking, was the main OSS element coordinating operations in China and northern French Indo-China (Vietnam) after late 1944. China had several other OSS units, including the Sino-American Special Cooperative Agreement (SACO), a joint command with the U.S. Navy Group, China and Chinese intelligence, and the 5329th Air and Ground Forces Resources and Technical Staff (AGFTRS), an intelligence group that assisted the U.S. 14th Air Force.



Detachment 303, based in New Delhi, served as an administrative base for the OSS in the Southeast Asia Command (SEAC). The OSS operational element in SEAC was Detachment 404, based in Kandy, Ceylon.



Detachment 404 was responsible for operations in southern Burma, Thailand, Malaya, the Andaman Islands, the Dutch East Indies (Indonesia), and southern French Indo-China.



Detachment 505, originally a supply, administrative, and personnel base for Detachment 101, became separate in early 1945. Detachment 505 also serviced Detachment 202 in China.





OSS DETACHMENT 101: 1942-1945

Detachment 101's mission in Burma was to collect intelligence on enemy order of battle, find targets for the 10th Air Force, rescue downed Allied aircrews, and to recruit native troops—mostly ethnic Kachins—to serve as guerillas. Activated on 22 April 1942 under the command of Colonel Carl F. Eifler, Detachment 101 was the first Special Operations (SO) unit formed by the Coordinator of Information (COI), the predecessor to the OSS.¹⁴ Detachment 101's operations supported a combined operations campaign that earned the unit the reputation as "the most effective tactical combat force in OSS."¹⁵ For its distinguished contributions to the war in the Far East, Detachment 101 was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation.

Burma was in the resource-starved China-Burma-India area of operations, a backwater compared to other theaters. OSS observers recognized, however, that "the Burma Campaign is probably not going to be the big show, but it is the 'going' show."¹⁶ In 1943, Detachment 101 launched a series of long-range penetration operations by airdrop—the first done by OSS. However, it was their highly successful overland penetrations behind Japanese lines that enabled them to expand their operations. In 1944, led by Colonel William R. Peers, Detachment 101 established themselves firmly in the CBI by conducting "all operations which they [conventional forces] are not prepared to undertake."¹⁷ Detachment 101 was a force multiplier in the first major Allied success in northern Burma, the capture of Myitkyina. They cut enemy lines of communication, ambushed Japanese troops, and provided scouts and guides for Merrill's Marauders and the British Chindits. Detachment 101 then assisted Allied units, like the MARS Task Force, as they advanced south. A sub-element, the Arakan Field Unit (AFU) supported the British 14th Army in its campaign to recapture the Burmese coast enroute to Rangoon. After the fall of the Burmese capital, Detachment 101 elements from north Burma were tasked to perform a more conventional role. As the only U.S. ground forces, they used their guerillas to clear the Shan States and to block the flight of Japanese forces to Thailand.

At the end of its operations in July 1945, Detachment 101 was credited with 5,500 known Japanese killed. Fewer than 30 Americans and 184 native soldiers were killed, and only 86 native personnel were captured or missing in action. At its busiest time, Detachment 101 had nearly 9,200 guerillas under arms.¹⁸ Detachment 101 is the OSS element that most closely mirrors the mission and capability of today's Army Special Forces Group.



COL Carl F. Eifler commanded Detachment 101 until December 1943.



COL William R. Peers succeeded Eifler. He retired in 1973, as a LTG.



CPT Zachariah Ebaugh (left) jokes with indigenous troops. Detachment 101, and the OSS, had to foster good relations with the locals in order to survive.



A Stinson L-1 of Detachment's 101's "Red Ass" Air Force, which supported combined operations in Burma.



Unofficial silver Burma Campaign Bar worn by some Detachment 101 personnel.



China-Burma-India Theater SSI



Unofficial Detachment 101 patch worn by U.S. personnel. The term "Jinghpaw" is another name for Kachin.

DETACHMENT 404: 1944-1945



A Detachment 404 commander briefs the next mission, Burma 1945.



CPT Erik J. Anderson of the Arakan Field Unit MU section leads a rubber boat team down a chaung (tidal creek), Burma, 1945.



Lord Louis Mountbatten was the British commander in charge of the Southeast Asia Command. He is on the left talking with Cora DuBois, the OSS Detachment 404 Research and Analysis (R&A) chief.



*Southeast Asia
Command SSI*

Detachment 404 was formed to help coordinate intelligence collection and operations of covert organizations like the OSS and British Special Operations Executive (SOE) in the Far East. Detachment 404 also recruited indigenous personnel from enemy-controlled areas to be reinserted as trained agents via submarines. In addition, it established coast watchers to gather meteorological and topographical shoreline data, record tide tables, report on Japanese shipping, and arrange for the rescue of downed Allied pilots.¹⁹ Located in what is now Sri Lanka, Detachment 404 worked with Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten's predominately-British Southeast Asia Command (SEAC).

Detachment 404's area of responsibility was huge—the Andaman Islands, India, Indonesia, Malaya, Sumatra, Thailand, and parts of Burma and French Indo-China (Vietnam).²⁰ Thailand, an occupied and unwilling Japanese ally, offered the most potential for OSS operations. High-ranking Thai politicians enabled Special Operations (SO) and Secret Intelligence (SI) teams to infiltrate in late 1944. These teams collected volumes of intelligence and trained a guerrilla force, but the war ended before they could be employed. The OSS support generated such positive feelings towards the U.S. that President Dwight D. Eisenhower appointed William J. Donovan to be his Ambassador to Thailand in 1953.

The Arakan Field Unit (AFU) of Detachment 404 was a 175-man element that contained SI personnel, Operational Groups (OG) and the Maritime Unit (MU). It was employed along the Burma coast to assist the XV Indian Corps of the British XIV Army. In February 1945, Detachment 101 assumed operational control of the AFU. OG and MU personnel jointly conducted reconnaissance missions along the Arakan coast and up its numerous inlets and rivers. While helping liberate Rangoon, AFU elements collected considerable intelligence. These accomplishments in a highly political environment demonstrated how the OSS persevered and adapted to accomplish all missions.



Members of the Arakan Field Unit Operational Group section, MAJ Lloyd E. Peddicord and CPT George H. Bright, plan operations in Burma, December 1944.

DETACHMENT 202: 1944-1945

Detachment 202 collected intelligence and supported Chinese forces in order to tie down as many Japanese troops as possible.²¹ The OSS began operating in 1943, in conjunction with the U.S. Navy Group, China, and Chinese intelligence, under the Sino-American Special Cooperative Agreement (SACO). Although the OSS conducted several successful operations, SACO's isolation, lack of supplies, bureaucratic obstacles, and Nationalist Chinese demands to control all operations prevented it from reaching its potential. Fortunately, in late 1944 the U.S. Army theater commander for China and French Indo-China (Vietnam), Lieutenant General Albert C. Wedemeyer, pulled the OSS under his command as an independent agency. This enabled the newly created Detachment 202 to operate outside of SACO and away from Chinese influence.



Annamese troops of SO Team DEER patrol in French Indo-China, late 1945.



Chinese Commandos receive instruction on how to jump from a C-47 drop aircraft. The OG instructors used a crashed C-47 as a mock-up.

The Operational Groups (OG), Special Operations (SO), and Secret Intelligence (SI) branches of Detachment 202 immediately began exercising their capabilities. The OGs were directed to train twenty company-sized paratrooper elements. Despite the lack of full Nationalist Chinese cooperation, the OGs formed six fully trained commandos and had begun to conduct operations by the end of hostilities. These Commandos were the first paratroop units in the Nationalist Chinese Army. SO had the mission to create, arm, train, and lead guerrilla forces. By the end of the war, a few SO groups were leading guerilla forces 500 miles behind enemy lines.²² These SO guerilla groups, some as large as 1,500 men, cut roads and rails, blew up road and train bridges, and killed thousands of Japanese troops. Although on a smaller scale than OG or SO operations, SI established several teams in French Indo-China and southern China. These teams reported Japanese naval and air traffic and meteorological



A member of SO Team LEOPARD cranks a generator to power the team's radio, China, 1945.

conditions. Although the Japanese surrender ended combat operations, these Detachment 202 elements demonstrated the capabilities of the OSS in China.

One of the most important successes in China took place immediately after the atomic bomb was dropped. "Mercy Mission" teams parachuted into Japanese prison camps to prevent further harm to Allied POWs. The OSS contributed the bulk of the personnel, although several other organizations participated as well. This was done at great peril because many Japanese commands were not aware that the war was over. Eleven "Mercy" teams from OSS China arranged for food, medical care, and the evacuation of POWs to Allied camps.



Chinese Commando Patch



OSS Agent Identification Badge. These serial numbered pin-on insignia were used in China to help OSS personnel identify one another.

AN ENDURING LEGACY: 1945-PRESENT

At the end of WWII, the OSS evaluated its wartime operations. For more than three years, the organization had been involved in combat and intelligence collection worldwide. At its peak in December 1944, OSS employed 13,000 personnel, 7,500 of whom served overseas. In terms of numbers, the OSS was smaller than a U.S. Army infantry division in WWII.

The special operations branches were not compatible with a post-war world. Major General William J. Donovan, knowing that the OSS would be disbanded, sought to preserve the covert branches by incorporating them into a peacetime intelligence agency. Donovan reasoned; "It is not easy to set up a modern intelligence system. It is more difficult to do so in time of peace than in time of war."²³ Despite Donovan's best efforts, President Harry S. Truman ordered him to dissolve the OSS by 1 October 1945.

Research and Analysis (R&A), universally recognized as the most valuable OSS function, was transferred to the Department of State. The War Department assumed responsibility for the remaining OSS assets, under the Strategic Services Unit (SSU). Intelligence collection, like that conducted by Secret Intelligence (SI) and X-2, the OSS counter-intelligence branch, was retained at a reduced level. The paramilitary branches: Special Operations (SO), Operational Groups (OG), Maritime Unit (MU), and Morale Operations (MO), were dismantled.

In February 1946, President Truman created the Central Intelligence Group (CIG), as an interim agency. The National Security Act of 1947 converted the CIG into the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). Although there was a two year gap between the demise of the OSS and the creation of the Agency, the CIA views Donovan as its "founding father." Likewise, the Special Operations community benefited from OSS. Colonel Aaron Bank, a former Jedburgh, formed the U.S. Army Special Forces in 1952. Bank recruited WWII combat veterans of airborne units, the First Special Service Force, and the OSS, for Special Forces. In 1989, the newly formed United States Army Special Operations Command (USASOC), at Fort Bragg, NC, chose the Fairbairn-Sykes dagger, carried by some members of the OSS, to be the centerpiece of its insignia. To demonstrate its connection to the OSS, the U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) wears an adaptation of the unofficial OSS spearhead insignia as its shoulder patch. ♣

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OSS Patch



CIA Seal



USASOC SSI



SOCOM SSI

The Lords of Darkness

By Kenneth Finlayson

MODERN Army Special Operations Aviation (ARSOA) grew out of the failure of the United States' effort to rescue the American hostages held by Iran in 1980. Operation EAGLE CLAW, the complex two-night operation designed to rescue the 53 hostages from the American embassy in Teheran, was aborted when a U.S. Marine helicopter collided with an Air Force C-130 aircraft during refueling at the Desert One airstrip. In the aftermath of the failed rescue attempt, the Army recognized that Army Special Operations Forces (ARSO) needed dedicated special rotary wing (helicopter) aviation support. This led to the formation of Task Force 160 in 1981, the forerunner of today's 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (SOAR). The 160th SOAR "Night Stalkers" are the Army's premier special operations aviation element, specializing in long-range, low-level night penetrations of enemy airspace to deliver ARSO forces to locations with pinpoint accuracy. From 1982 until 1994, the 45th Aviation Battalion (SO)(A), later redesignated the 1st Battalion, 245th Aviation Regiment, Oklahoma Army National Guard, served as a National Guard "round-out" unit for the 160th. During this period, the 1/245th, the "Lords of Darkness," supported ARSO operations worldwide.

This article is a history of the 1st Battalion, 245th Aviation Regiment from 1978 until 1994. The organization, training and deployments of the OKARNG 1/245th in support of 1st Special Operations Command (1st SOCOM), United States Army Special Forces Command (USASFC), and later United States Army Special Operations Command (USASOC) are the focus of this story. The 1st Battalion, 245th Aviation Regiment began when Detachment 1, 445th Aviation Company of the Oklahoma National Guard (OKARNG) in Tulsa, was reorganized and redesignated Company D (-), 149th Aviation Battalion on 1 October 1978.¹ Initially it was a light attack helicopter company with 127 personnel and three UH-1M Huey attack and two OH-58 light observation helicopters.² In the post Desert One build-up of Army SOF aviation, the unit was redesignated the 45th Aviation Battalion, (Light Helicopter Combat) on 1 May 1982 and given the mission to support ARSO.³

The 45th Aviation Bn organized under a Table of Distribution and Allowances (TDA NGW7QQAA effective 1 May 1982), expanded the unit to 203 personnel and 25 OH-6 Cayuse helicopters.⁴ The unit returned the OH-58's and UH-1M Hueys to the National Guard Bureau. In 1985, B Company, 149th Aviation Battalion



45th Infantry
Division SSI



245th Aviation
Regiment DUI



160th SOAR
DUI



1st SOCOM
SSI



USASOC
SSI



245th personnel waiting to load a UH-1H on board an Air Force C-5A Galaxy. The venerable Vietnam-era Huey was a mainstay of the 245th, at AASF#1 in Lexington, Oklahoma.



The OH-6 Cayuse was the primary A Company aircraft of the 1/245th from 1982 until 1986. The Cayuse was modified into the AH-6C attack and the MH-6B lift models. Under the SOA configurations, they were known as "Little Birds."

located in Lexington, Oklahoma was assigned to the 45th Aviation battalion. They brought with them 23 UH-1H Hueys. In November 1986 it became B Company, 45th Aviation.⁵ Of the 25 OH-6s in the battalion, 17 were reconfigured as the MH-6B lift model and 8 as AH-6C attack model.⁶ On 1 June 1987 the 45th Avn Bn (LT

HEL CBT) was renamed the 45th Aviation Bn (Special Operations) (Airborne) and on 1 October 1987 was again redesignated to be the 1st Bn, 245th Aviation Regiment (SO) (A). This was the unit designation until inactivation on 1 September 1994.⁷ Throughout this period, the battalion trained to mirror the 160th's operational standards in order to provide the highest caliber support to AROSF in CONUS (the Continental United States) and abroad.

In 1982, when the 45th was assigned the mission to support ARSOF, the battalion consisted of a Headquarters and Headquarters Company (HHC), three light aviation companies and an aviation intermediate maintenance company (AVIM). The HHC, A Company with the 23 OH-6's (17 MH-6B and 8 AH-6C Little Birds) and D Company (AVIM) were located at Army Aviation Support Facility #2 (AASF #2) adjacent to the Tulsa International Airport. B Company (15 UH-1Hs) and C Company (8 UH-1Hs) were at AASF #1 in Lexington, Oklahoma, south of Oklahoma City, roughly 130 miles from Tulsa.⁸

On 26 August 1989, AASF #2 in Tulsa was formally dedicated after a \$7-million military construction upgrade. The new facility on 50 acres of land adjacent to the Tulsa International Airport included a two-story National Guard Armory, flight operations center, organizational maintenance building, an AVIM hangar, a 2,000 foot-runway, and the flight line for helicopter parking.⁹ The Armory was named for Chief Warrant Officer Two Dennis L. Barlow. The Flight Operations Center was named for Warrant Officer One David O. Barr. These two 45th Aviation Battalion pilots died in a training accident in March 1987.¹⁰ In 1990, the Organizational Maintenance Shop was dedicated to Staff Sergeant David A. Brown who died while on deployment in Honduras in 1988. The improved facilities better supported the high mission profile of the 1/245th.

Special operations aviation support to ARSOF is predicated on the ability to fly low-level operations under night vision goggles (NVGs) and hit the designated target/landing zones on time. The time-on-target standard of the 160th SOAR is "plus or minus 30 seconds."

The Three Basic Helicopters of the Lords of Darkness



25 OH-6 Cayuse, 1982-1989. In 1986 17 were reconfigured as MH-6Bs and 8 as AH-6Cs.



23 UH-1H Hueys, 1985-1994. 15 Hueys were assigned to B Company and 8 to C Company.



15 UH-60A Black Hawk Helicopters, 1986-1994. The 245th received 2 Black Hawks in 1986 and 13 more in 1989.

The 245th aircrews trained assiduously to meet this standard. From its inception as a Special Operations Aviation unit, the 245th was blessed with experienced pilots. Many were Vietnam veterans, with hundreds of hours in the cockpit. "The potential was there. We had a great opportunity with the 245th," said Brigadier General John N. Dailey, the commander of the 160th SOAR from 1986 to 1990.¹¹ Still, training with NVGs was a priority. At this time, flying at night under goggles was a relatively new skill and the 160th was the primary Army's practitioner. CW4 Robert C. Lane, who completed flight training in 1968, recalled, "In 1983, we started in heavy on NVG training. We trained with the 160th guys, and there was a lot of trial and error."¹² Training in Yuma, AZ, and in Oklahoma rapidly improved their NVG flying proficiency.¹³

Part of performing to the 160th SOAR's standards involved training the pilots and crews in mission planning and flight preparation and acquiring special skills. The NG pilots had to meet the same standards as the Active Army Night Stalker pilots in terms of flying hours, medical requirements and flight qualification.¹⁴ "They were great supporters," said COL Joseph Fucci, former 160th SOAR Commander. "They kept up with our SOPs and we were able to trade off IP's [Instructor Pilots]. From the standpoint of the Regiment, they were always part of it."¹⁵

The first stage for aircrews to achieve was Basic Mission Qualification (BMQ). This entailed a specific

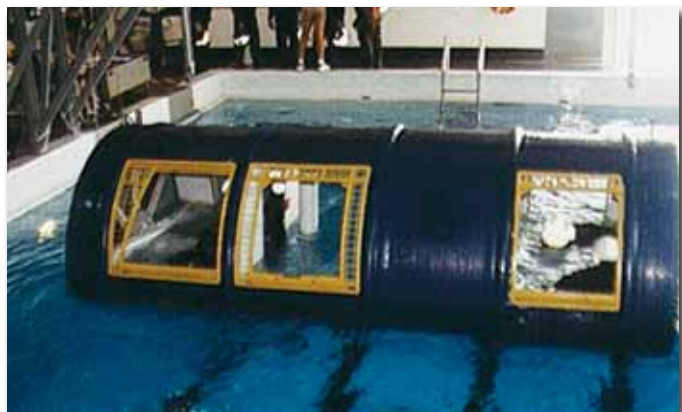


An artist's rendition of 245th pilots flying an OH-6 using night vision goggles.

CW4 Robert C. Lane using the SRU-36P Helicopter Emergency Egress Device (HEEDs) to provide oxygen to aircrewman exiting a submerged aircraft. Lane was preparing to be "dunked" at Pensacola, Florida.



number of flying hours under NVGs, meeting specific standards proficiency in navigation, and completing Survival Escape Resistance and Evasion (SERE) training, deck landing qualification with the U.S. Navy, and rotary wing "Dunker" egress training at Pensacola, FL. A three-week course designed by the 245th and the 160th



Training to exit a submerged aircraft is done in the "Dunker" at Pensacola Naval Air Station, Florida.



Captain Byron L. Barnhart enters the "Dunker" module for egress training. Completion of the training was a requirement for the 245th aircrews.



Army Rangers on board a UH-60A Black Hawk ready to "fast-rope" onto an objective. A Company, 245th flew the UH-60A from 1987 until 1994.



The MH-6B "Little Bird" provides a lift platform for up to four Army SOF personnel.



Rangers fast rope on to a rooftop from a UH-60A Black Hawk.

covered these criteria.¹⁶ The unit was assisted in the SERE training in 1990 and 1991 by Mobile Training Teams from the U. S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, before unit members attended the resistance and evasion portion of the SERE course at Fort Bragg.¹⁷ The 160th SOAR certified the first several BMQ courses. Once qualified as BMQ, the crews worked towards Fully Mission Qualified (FMQ) status, involving additional flight training and navigation under NVGs. After attaining FMQ, there were additional individual pilot qualifications.

The planning, coordination, and execution of an ARSOA mission are the responsibility of the Flight Lead (FL). To attain the Flight Lead Qualification (FLQ), pilots are trained in mission planning, coordinating the aircraft ingress and egress routes to the target, establishing checkpoints and navigation waypoints, and aircrew briefings. At least one FLQ pilot leads every mission. Every flight operation has an Air Mission Commander (AMC). This senior flight officer coordinates with the supported ground force and maintains situational awareness during the air mission. Major (MAJ) Emery Fountain, the commander of C Company in 1993 explained: "Probably the most rewarding job is the Air Mission Commander because he orchestrates mission planning and execution. Running neck and neck with him is the Flight Lead, who leads the group in and returns on time to pull them out."¹⁸

The 160th SOAR certified the first FLs and AMCs.¹⁹ Flying to the 160th standards, the 45th strived to provide

seamless support to ARSOF. When it was first dedicated to support ARSOF, the 45th had two types of helicopters. The OH-6 Cayuse helicopters had been configured as the MH-6B lift and AH-6C attack helicopters. The UH-1H Huey lift helicopters, like the MH-6 and AH-6 aircraft had been extensively modified with improved navigation and communications systems, although the upgrades were considerably less than what the 160th SOAR aircraft had.²⁰ (The 160th had no UH-1Hs.) CW4 Robert Lane said the lack of 'cutting edge' technology meant 'no modern marvels'. We had the Omega Navigation System, which was not very accurate, and no GPS [Global Positioning System]. It was 'finger on the map' navigation."²¹ In the midst of getting aircrews Special Operations Aviation (SOA)-qualified, was the transition to UH-60A Black Hawk helicopters in 1986.

In 1986, A Company received two UH-60A Black Hawks direct from the Sikorsky factory in Stratford, Connecticut. These were initially used to support the AH-6C and MH-6B Little Birds during deployments.²² In 1989, A Company received 13 UH-60As from the four Active Army SF Group Aviation Detachments. The 23 "Little Birds" (AH-6 and MH-6 aircraft) were transferred to the Army's Aviation and Missile Command (AMCOM) for redistribution. Most were migrated to the 160th SOAR. Company A became a UH-60A medium lift company of 15 aircraft.²³ The pilots, crews and maintenance personnel transitioned from Little Birds to Black Hawks while the UH-60s were upgraded to SOA standards. With the Black Hawks came a sharp escalation in the operational tempo.

Beginning in 1984, when eight MH-6's first deployed to Fort Bliss, Texas, to support the 5th SFG, until the unit inactivated in 1994, 245th support to ARSOF grew every year. Between 1984 and 1990, the unit supported the 75th Ranger Regiment (in Savannah, Georgia, Fort Walton Beach, Florida, Lacrosse, Wisconsin and Fort Lewis, Washington), the 1st, 5th and 7th SFGs (Fort Huachuca, Arizona, Fort Bliss, Texas, and McAlester, Oklahoma), and other ARSOF units in a wide variety of locations in the continental United States.²⁴ Between 1990 and 1993, UH-60 helicopters worked with Army special operations units and other government agencies at the Nevada



Davis Airfield in Muskogee, Oklahoma. The 245th staged out of Davis Airfield to support JRTC rotations at Fort Chaffee, AR and Fort Polk, LA. Flying from Davis Airfield enabled the 245th to extend flying times to support ARSOF long range penetrations.

Test Site at Mercury, Nevada.²⁵ Supporting the active component was only half of the 245th's ARSOF mission.

Support to the Reserve Component (National Guard and Army Reserve) SFGs was a major training mission for the 245th. In 1984, four MH-6's worked twice with the 20th SFG at Camp Blanding, Florida.²⁶ In subsequent years, the 245th worked with the 12th and 19th SFGs as well as the 20th. These missions took the unit to Little Rock, Arkansas, Camp Dawson, West Virginia, Pueblo, Colorado, Camp Williams, Utah, and Anchorage, Alaska.²⁷ Another significant requirement was supporting active and reserve SOF during their unit rotations to the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC).

The 245th deployed aircraft and crews to support 22 ARSOF unit rotations at JRTC from 1990 to 1994.²⁸ Two to eight aircraft with crews and maintenance personnel supported JRTC rotations at Fort Chaffee, Arkansas, until 1993, when the training center relocated to Fort Polk, Louisiana. On several rotations, the 245th staged for JRTC missions from Camp Gruber and Davis Airfield, near Muskogee, in eastern Oklahoma. This enabled the aircrews to practice long-range ARSOF penetrations. CW4 Robert Lane noted that the four-hour flight from Camp Gruber to Fort Chaffee, Arkansas was much like an actual mission. "The JRTC 'box' was pretty small. To get training with NVGs and on navigation, it was better to fly the longer legs."²⁹ At the JRTC, the primary mission was to insert SF teams at night to precise locations and to exfiltrate them as required. Some infiltrations involved



Soldiers of the 1st Special Forces Group rappel from a 245th UH-60A Black Hawk. The 245th supported active and reserve SF groups in CONUS and overseas.

parachute operations or "fast roping" the SF teams onto their objectives. The UH-60A Black Hawks and UH-1H Hueys supported these JRTC rotations. The older Hueys helped the SF ODAs (Operational Detachment Alpha). "When the SF teams went down range to work with other nations, they were more likely to be using UH-1s than Black Hawks. Training with our guys on the Hueys prepared them to use the UH-1s in other places," explained MAJ Keith Owens.³⁰ Exchanges with other nations took place between 1986 and 1994.



The 245th supported four deployments to Thailand. Here B Company UH-1Hs support the 19th SFG and the Royal Thai Army near Lop Buri in 1987.



Pilots from the Royal Thai Army trained with 245th airmen at the RTA Aviation Center in Lop Buri, Thailand in 1991. The pilots are posing with the Oklahoma Adjutant General, MG Donald F. Ferrell.



The 245th based out of the Palmerola airfield in Honduras to support the 7th Special Forces Group in Exercise LEMPIRA 87.

In April 1987, the 245th deployed four UH-1H Hueys to Thailand to support the 19th SFG during Exercise COBRA GOLD.³¹ Based out of Lop Buri, Thailand, the 245th supported the 19th and trained Royal Thai Army (RTA) helicopter pilots on night vision goggle flight techniques. "They used our goggles, the AN-PVS 5s. It was pretty seamless as far as working with their pilots," said First Sergeant Norman Crow. "We ended up doing a total of four rotations with the Thai Army."³² In 1987, the 245th deployed to Thailand, to support the 19th SFG and

work with the Royal Thai Army pilots supporting their Special Forces.³³ The 245th deployed four UH-1Hs and two MH-6s. The pilots flew with the RTA pilots and did mission planning training.³⁴ In 1991 the 245th went back to Thailand, this time without aircraft. They flew with the RTA pilots in their UH-1N Hueys.³⁵ A contingent of RTA pilots came to Oklahoma to train with the 245th at Camp Gruber in 1993.³⁶

In 1987, the 245th deployed MH-6B Little Birds and UH-1H Hueys to Honduras. They were supporting the 1st Bn, 7th SFG in Exercise LEMPIRA 87. A year later they returned to support the 2nd Bn, 7th SFG during LEMPIRA 88.³⁷ By 1993, the 245th had moved to Southwest Asia

Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) Terry R. Council, the 245th commander in 1993 recalled that "in January [1993] we sent two pilots and two crew chiefs to Bangladesh and flew their aircraft [Bell 412s]. We provided some of the first night training to the Bangladeshis at home. Three pilots and three crew chiefs trained Indonesian aviators for the first time in April 1993," said LTC Council.³⁸ Later that year, the battalion supported a five-week deployment to Townsville on the northeastern coast of Australia. Two UH-60A Black Hawks and a 30-man element of pilots, crewmembers and maintenance personnel supported a Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force (CJSOTF) of U.S. SOF (U.S. Army Special Forces, Navy SEALs, and Air Force Special Tactics teams) and Australian Special Air Service Regiment (ASASR) personnel.³⁹ Supporting a deployment schedule of this magnitude could not be accomplished with a normal weekend drill once a month.

The 245th belied the notion of the National Guard as a part-time force. Many 245th flight crews, staff officers and NCOs spent up to four months on active duty each year.⁴⁰ SOA standards could not be maintained with a single monthly drill weekend. "Our pilots flew an average of once a week, which is probably as much as a lot of active duty people. We did 15 exercises a year, for an average of two exercises per crewman and conducted 12 drill weekends a year," said LTC Council.⁴¹ CW4 Robert Lane described the routine as "three weekends a month. Two weekends would be spent on deployment supporting the SOF units and one here at home station training. This was the case from 1987 to 1994."⁴² In 1992 the battalion logged 6,297 flight hours supporting various missions; 604 hours supported ARSOF and ARSOA training, 894 hours supported conventional units and 763 hours supported State and Federal counter-narcotics programs.⁴³

The 245th worked with the Oklahoma Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs, the Oklahoma Highway Patrol, the Federal Bureau of Land Management, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs. In a more traditional National Guard role, it provided humanitarian relief assistance after natural disasters.⁴⁴ The ability to provide aircraft and crews to support this high operational tempo depended on a support force as dedicated and proficient as the aviators they supported.

The training of maintenance personnel for the various aircraft and the ability to load-out the unit for

AREAS of OPERATION



CONUS:

● Operations:
Tulsa, OK
Lexington, OK

● Training:
Yuma, AZ
Pensacola, FL
Fort Bragg, NC

● Support:
5th SFG
Fort Bliss, TX
75th Rangers
Savannah, GA
Fort Walton Beach, FL
LaCrosse, WI
Fort Lewis, WA
1st, 5th, 7th SFG
Fort Huachuca, AZ
Fort Bliss, TX
McAlester, OK
12th, 19th, 20th SFG
Camp Blanding, FL
Little Rock, AR
Camp Dawson, WV
Pueblo, CO
Camp Williams, UT
Anchorage, AL
JRTC
Fort Chaffee
Fort Polk
NTS
Mercury, NV

Honduras

Bangladesh

Thailand

Indonesia

Australia



deployments were major missions of the 245th. 1SG Norman Crow recalled the unit's effort to get the training program to standard. "Until 1989, we were in Sperry, [Oklahoma,] in an armory built in the 1930's by the WPA [The Depression-era Works Progress Administration]. There was no MOS [military occupation specialty] school for the OH-6 mechanics so we had to initiate an on-the-job-training [OJT] program. For the Hueys and later the Black Hawks, we were able to send our mechanics to Army schools."⁴⁵ In 1991, the battalion started a program to train mechanics on the CH-47D Chinook. The 245th was anticipating receipt of the CH-47 to replace the UH-1H Hueys. This would bring the battalion more in line with the 3rd Battalion, 160th SOAR. By the spring of 1993, twenty-three mechanics were fully trained on the CH-47D at AASF#1 in Lexington.⁴⁶ Without the organic CH-47D airframes, the unit was forced to adopt innovative ways to maintain their proficiency. They worked with other National Guard units flying the Chinook, and the unit completed an entire phase maintenance program on two CH-47Ds of the 3rd Battalion, 160th SOAR. Phase maintenance entails a complete teardown of the aircraft, inspection and replacement of worn parts, reassembly and test flight. The unit did this vital maintenance procedure while completing the scheduled maintenance on its own UH-1H Hueys.⁴⁷ Much to the chagrin of the mechanics, the 245th was inactivated before receiving any CH-47D aircraft. Maintenance training was only one part of the unit's mission. Getting the aircraft to the operational area was a major task for the support personnel.

At the Tulsa International Airport Air National Guard ramp near AASF #2 and at Will Rogers International Air National Guard facility in Oklahoma City, near AASF #1 in Lexington, the unit could practice loading and off-loading helicopters using Air Force transport aircraft. Regular practice on Air Force C-130 and C-5A transport aircraft reduced the time to prepare aircraft for loading and unloading. The unit trained to have the off-loaded aircraft mission capable in a matter of minutes from the time the aircraft touched down.⁴⁸ This capability was critical to successfully supporting Field Landing Strip (FLS) operations and getting aircraft launched and recovered quickly. Once in the operational area, the 245th supported its helicopters internally. CW4 Jaime N. Smith, the unit Property Book Officer and "logistician," was a regular member on the Advanced Echelon (ADVON) for the deployments. Arriving ahead of the unit, Smith and his team would begin coordination with the support-



The 245th became very proficient at loading and off-loading aircraft during deployments. Here OH-6s are loaded aboard a U.S. Air Force C-130 Hercules at the Air National Guard facility at the Tulsa airport.



Preparing and loading UH-1H Hueys and OH-6s aboard a U.S. Air Force C-5A Galaxy was a constant training mission.



Scheduled to receive the CH-47D in the early 1990's, the 245th developed a cadre of trained aircrews and mechanics, but received the aircraft after inactivation.

ed unit and arrange the logistical support. Often this meant establishing one or more Forward Area Arming and Refueling Points (FAARPs) along the ingress and egress routes.⁴⁹ The 38-man Airfield Services platoon provided the expertise and personnel to make the logistics happen. Under SFC Mike Kittrell, airborne qualified personnel accumulated 678 parachute jumps by 1994.⁵⁰



A UH-60A Black Hawk prior to loading onto a U.S. Air Force C-5A Galaxy at the Air National Guard facility at the Tulsa airport.

The 245th achieved a very high level of expertise in every facet of aviation support before force structure changes and funding prompted the inactivation in 1994. The 245th did not deploy in support of Operation DESERT STORM, but provided "Little Bird" instructor pilots to replace deployed IP's from the "Green Platoon," the training platoon of the 160th.⁵¹ In the drawdown of forces and reduced Department of Defense funding, the United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) deleted the 245th from its Program Objective Memorandum (POM), the source document for unit funding.⁵² LTC Terry Council, the last battalion commander of the 245th said "We got caught in the 'Peace' dividend and were not funded in the POM. USSOCOM had to make some hard decisions."⁵³ 1994 was the last year the unit received active Army funding. On 1 September 1994, the 1st Battalion, 245th Aviation (SO) (A) was inactivated at AASF #2 in Tulsa. Colonel Bryan D. Brown, the 160th SOAR commander and a number of his staff attended the inactivation ceremony.⁵⁴ "They carried a lot of water for us, particularly in supporting ARSOF in the Pacific. They had unbelievable skills," said Brown.⁵⁵

After inactivation, the individual helicopter companies were assigned to National Guard aviation units in neighboring states. A Company (UH-60As) and D Company (AVIM) were reflagged to the 108th Aviation Regiment in the Kansas Army National Guard.⁵⁶ The UH-60s of A Company were later transferred to the 1st Battalion, 285th Attack Reconnaissance Battalion of the Arizona Army National Guard.⁵⁷ In the years following inactivation, B and C companies received CH-47D Chinooks. A C-23 Sherpa transport airplane detachment was added to the OKARNG.⁵⁸ Today the Chinooks are part of the 36th Combat Aviation Brigade, Texas Army National Guard and the C-23s belong to the 641st Aviation Regiment of the Oregon Army National Guard.⁵⁹ Left behind at AASF #2 in Tulsa is the 145th Airfield Operations Detachment, which provides air traffic control support to both active and reserve component aviation units on deployment.⁶⁰

During the twelve years that the 245th supported Army SOF as a "capstone" unit of the 160th, two



A Forward Area Arming and Refueling Point (FAARP) near Disney, Oklahoma. The ability of the 245th support personnel to maintain organic aircraft was a key to success during deployments.



The multi-role C-23B Sherpa provides long-range cargo and passenger-carrying capability to the Army National Guard.

accomplishments stand out. First: the high volume of duty days served by the unit members to support operations. In 1992, 245th personnel averaged 110 days on active duty.⁶¹ This was far above the total of a traditional National Guardsman. It was due to the high operational tempo and the dedication and commitment of the "Lord of Darkness." Second: while the 245th duplicated missions and met the standards of the 160th SOAR in ARSOF support, the unit did not have the same level of technology. As CW4 Robert Lane said, "We did the same things, only we did them the old fashioned way."⁶² That the 245th could provide support to ARSOF indistinguishable from that given by the 160th SOAR was a tribute to the professionalism of the aircrews and support personnel of the 245th. The Lords of Darkness reduced the mission load on the 160th SOAR battalions significantly and demonstrated that top quality performance is not restricted to the Active forces. ♣

The author would like to thank COL (ret) Billy Wood and MAJ Byron Barnhart for the photographs used in this article and all former members of the 1/245th interviewed for this article for giving generously of their time.

Endnotes

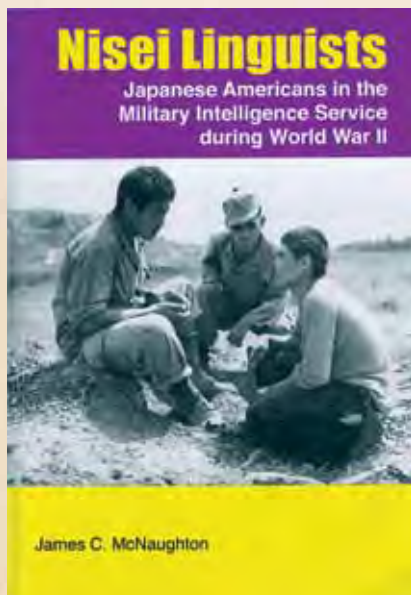
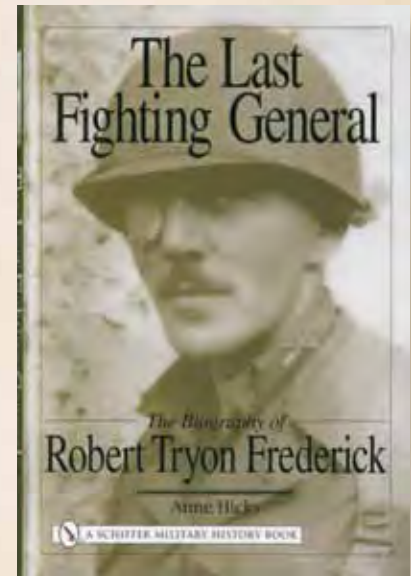
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- 56 Council interview.
- 57 Lane interview.
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- 61 Wood email, 24 October 2007.
- 62 Lane interview.

Books in the Field

"Books in the Field" provides short descriptions of books related to subjects covered in the current issue of *Veritas*. Readers are encouraged to use these recommendations as a starting point for individual study on topics related to Army Special Operations history.

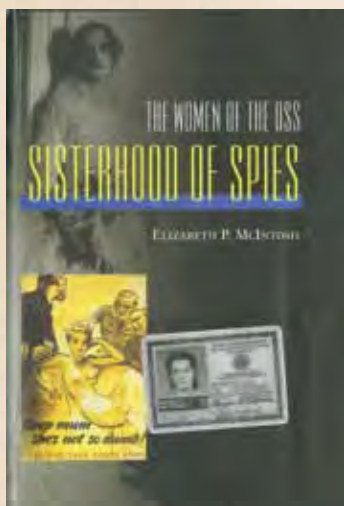
Anne Hicks, *The Last Fighting General: The Biography of Robert Tryon Frederick* (Atglen, PA: Schiffer Military History, 2006).

Anne Hicks does an excellent job presenting the life of her father, Major General Robert T. Frederick, the founding commander of the Canadian-American First Special Service Force (FSSF). The first four chapters describe Frederick's early life, appointment to West Point and his assignments as a Coast Artillery officer in California, Panama, and Hawaii. These provide valuable insight into the man who organizes the FSSF. The majority of the book (chapters 5-10) describes the formation of the FSSF and the major battles of the Force. Hicks describes how Frederick's style of "leading from the front" influenced officer and sergeant leaders of the unit. His constant valorous leadership and personal bravery was recognized with two Distinguished Service Crosses, a Silver Star, two Bronze Stars, and eight Purple Hearts during World War II (plus additional service and foreign awards). Mrs. Hicks documents his wartime service as commander of the 1st Airborne Task Force during the invasion of Southern France (Operation DRAGOON) and as the Commanding General of the 45th Infantry Division during its drive into Germany. The work concludes with the general's post war assignments, commanding the Coast Artillery School, U.S. Forces Austria, Fort Ord, California, and the Military Advisory Assistance Group (MAAG) in Greece during their civil war. Contains photographs, notes, bibliography, index, and appendix of General Frederick's awards and decorations.



James C. McNaughton, *Nisei Linguists: Japanese Americans in the Military Intelligence Service during World War II* (Washington DC: Center for Military History, 2007)

James McNaughton, the current U.S. European Command Historian, describes the establishment and achievements of the little known U.S. Army Military Intelligence Service (MIS). The MIS was made up primarily of second-generation Japanese-Americans (Nisei) who served as military interpreters and translators in World War II. Dr. McNaughton does an excellent job explaining how the War Department recruited Japanese-American soldiers and established Japanese language schools to train military linguists for the war in Asia. The linguists supported units throughout Asia, including the 11th Airborne Division, the Office of Strategic Services, Merrill's Marauders, and the MARS Task Force. The majority of literature on Japanese-Americans in WWII describes the combat exploits of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team. This book expands the field. Photos, maps, notes, bibliography, and an index are included.



Elizabeth P. McIntosh, *Sisterhood of Spies: The Women of the OSS* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1998)

Primarily remembered for its field operations, the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) had multiple functions and branches that supported clandestine operations worldwide. Several thousand women served in the OSS. *Sisterhood of Spies* is the only available work that focuses on their contributions to the OSS. The OSS employed women for multiple duties ranging from administration and support to research and analysis, to the creation of clandestine propaganda products, and as field agents collecting intelligence. Based primarily on interviews and archive documents, the book covers the exploits of several women including the agent Virginia Hall—who was awarded a Distinguished Service Cross for her valorous actions—and those of the author. McIntosh offers valuable insights into the workings of the OSS Morale Operations branch—charged with the production and dissemination of clandestine, or “black,” propaganda—in the Far East. Contains photographs, notes, bibliography, and an index.

Kermit Roosevelt, *War Report of the OSS* (New York: Walker, 1976)

Kermit Roosevelt, *The Overseas Targets: War Report of the OSS, Volume II* (New York: Walker, 1976)

The Office of Strategic Services (OSS) is considered the predecessor of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and one of the forerunners of U.S. Army Special Operations Forces. It was set up primarily as an organization to compile, analyze, and disseminate intelligence, and secondly, to conduct unconventional warfare. It is not a simple organization to understand or explain. In short, if anyone is looking for a book that is a fairly comprehensive view of the OSS or the Coordinator of Information (COI), its predecessor organization, there is none. These two volumes, however, are the best available and are critical reading if one wants to understand the two organizations. The first volume, simply titled *The War Report of the OSS* covers the history of the Coordinator of Information, and the OSS headquarters history. This includes the politics surrounding the creation of the organization and the administration, politics, and the formation of the separate OSS branches. The second volume, *The Overseas Targets*, the larger of the two, covers global operations. The European Theater receives the most attention, but operations in the Far East are also covered. Individual operations of each OSS branch by geographic area are mentioned, although these parts are understandably brief. Few members are specifically cited. Anonymity, though frustrating, is the rule. Long out of print, the two volumes can be found in libraries or through used book dealers. They contain maps, introductions, and an index. Kermit Roosevelt, the son of President Theodore Roosevelt, served in the COI and Secret Intelligence Branch of the OSS.



In the Next Issue of Veritas

Operation BAAZ TSUKA: The Desert Eagles Return to the Panjwayi Valley

By Kenneth Finlayson and Major Alan Meyer

The failure of NATO/ISAF to follow-up on the success of Operation MEDUSA in September 2006 allowed the Taliban to regain control in the valley. In December, 2006, the 1st Battalion, 3rd Special Forces Group returned to again drive the insurgents out of their stronghold. This time, the Desert Eagles established checkpoints and implemented a counter-insurgency operation for the long-term control of the strategic Panjwayi Valley.



“Timing is Everything”: A POW Escape during WWII *by Charles H. Briscoe*

Captain Terrance A. Vangen knew well that “timing is everything” when his small UN Civil Assistance Team escaped P’yongyang in early December 1950, the day before Communist Chinese Forces (CCF) recaptured the North Korean capital. During WWII, CPT Vangen, F Company, 385th Infantry, 76th Infantry Division, had been forward reconnoitering his objective for the next day when he was ambushed, wounded, and captured on 5 April 1945. This tough officer bided his time to take advantage of the fluid conditions that accompanied constant US Army offensives into Germany to escape his embattled captors on 16 April 1945.



The War in El Salvador: Part Two: 1983-1988 *by Charles H. Briscoe*

Part Two of this trilogy on the Army SOF role during the war in El Salvador covers 1983-1988. It spans three periods: the final two years of the desperation phase when the El Salvadoran armed forces (ESAF) were rapidly expanded; the sustainment phase from 1984-1987; and the early years of the stalemate with the FMLN guerrillas. During the MILGP transition from SF Mobile Training Teams (MTT) to OPATT (Operations and Planning Assistance Training Teams) at the brigades, the American advisors at San Miguel fought for their lives in June 1986 and the first USSF soldier, Staff Sergeant Gregory Fronius, was killed at El Paraiso in late March 1987.



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